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CARWELL;

OR,

CRIME AND SORROW.

Sheridan, Mrs Thomas (Callander)

O little did my mother think,
The day she cradled me,
The land I was to travel in,
The death I was to die. SCOTCH BALLAD.

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CARWELL;

OR,

CRIME AND SORROW.

CHAPTER I.

"Of what use is it to recount sorrows that have ceased—to number tears that are dried in dust, which soon shall cover the weeper? Would it not be better to lie down in humble, silent hope, than to weary and waste the latest hours of closing existence in attempts to extort the compassion of one's fellow-creatures?"

I have asked myself this question repeatedly. I have seen the folly of this record, and yet I

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persist; but if these papers should be read, I shall obtain the tears of the charitable—I shall awaken in others the boding anxiety that in my heart is so soon to cease for ever. How few are the hours of my short life in which that anxiety was not felt!

To trace my faults and misfortunes from their beginning, I must speak of events long past, and of circumstances that are forgotten by all but their victim.

About twenty-three years since, a Clergyman from Yorkshire was induced to make a journey to London, to solicit the assistance of a wealthy relation to extricate him from some pecuniary difficulties. The companions of his journey were a sickly and helpless wife, and a lovely daughter of fifteen. He did not obtain the kindness he sought, and he felt the disappointment too keenly to survive it. His wife, who was his superior in birth, but his inferior in understanding, instead of exerting herself to supply his place to their only child, sat down

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in hopeless and stupified dejection, to lament the past, and dread the future.

The same weakness of mind that palsied her faculties in sorrow and humiliation, had in better times prompted her to a style of living beyond what suited the lot she had chosen; and she had reared her daughter rather for that mode of life which she had relinquished to marry the unhappy Brande, than for the lowly station which their circumstances seemed to promise. By nature ardent and romantic, but from injudicious education helpless and unreflecting, Charlotte Brande seemed, in spite of an excellent understanding, and the best of human hearts, to be exposed to peculiar danger from her forlorn situation, and the singular beauty of her person. A remarkable incident saved her from such evils — evils which her mother had a thousand times foreboded. If we are often disappointed in our fondest hopes, we are still more often saved from the sorrows we anticipate.

It chanced that Mrs. Brande had occasion to present a draft for acceptance. Though a small sum, it was the last wreck of property she possessed; and her consternation was extreme, at learning that it was refused. "What will become of us!" she exclaimed, turning to her daughter, after hearing from one of the clerks the reason of the non-acceptance. At that moment, an elderly man, who had accidentally witnessed this transaction, stepped forward and said, in a low tone of voice, "This circumstance seems to inconvenience you, Madam. Allow me to advance the money."

His age, manner, and, above all, her desperate situation, induced Mrs. Brande to avail herself of his offer. An acquaintance with the stranger was thus commenced; and, after a few visits, to her great surprise he proposed to marry her young daughter Charlotte, apologising for an offer so apparently unsuitable, by the offer of all the comforts which money can purchase. Gratitude for an attachment so dis-

interested, and the sight of her kind mother's anxiety and distressed situation, induced Charlotte to become the bride of a man, who by every indulgence made her forget the disparity of their ages. Mr. Scroope was a merchant; he was said to be wealthy, but sometimes was accused of risking too much in doubtful speculation.

Ten years rolled by, and Charlotte had known no sorrow but the loss of her mother, while the birth of the unhappy subject of these memoirs had added to her comforts and her hopes. One morning, Mr. Scroope came home with a cloudy brow and absent manner. He complained of the return of some gouty pains with which he had occasionally been visited; and during the evening, he sat silent and regardless of Charlotte's attempts to amuse him, and retired early to bed. From that bed he never arose: an apoplexy seized him in the night, and he died in a few hours. On the day of his death he had been declared a bankrupt, and

the shock of this event, it was supposed, had produced or accelerated his fatal illness.

The luxury and splendour in which Charlotte had lived for the last ten years vanished, and nothing remained to her but the helplessness that affluence produces, and the desire that her poverty might be hidden from the world. With this view, she retired to a small lodging in a nursery-ground at Chelsea, where she spent three years in a state of privation, but little removed from want.

At this period, her mind awoke from the depression it had so long laboured under, and she made many efforts to give me such education as she was capable of conducting; but her own had been very superficial, and her early marriage and subsequent dissipated life, had stopped all improvement; so that after she had communicated all she knew, I remained very ignorant. But I loved my indulgent mother, and my caresses and attention gave her so much pleasure, that she gradually grew reconciled to

the retirement we lived in, and my needle-work, and the humble talent of copying music neatly, made some addition to our small income. My mother, pleased to have a companion in her labours, redoubled her industry, and from long habits of privation, we began to find our improved situation, by comparison, almost easy.

We had hitherto lived in profound retirement. Our landlady sometimes sat half an hour with my mother, and once or twice in a spring, we received a visit from a relation of my father's, the only person to whom my mother thought herself obliged to make her residence known. This lady was married to a rich merchant, and valued every person according to his possessions. The little attention she thought fit to pay us, was unaccompanied by kindness, afforded little pleasure, and gradually ceased. I attained my seventeenth year without acquaintances, or connection with any of my fellow-creatures, except those who lived

beneath the same roof. At this time, another inmate was added to us.

I tremble, and my heart fails as I approach the beginning of a tale of sorrow, remorse, and destruction.

My mother was seized with a rheumatic fever, accompanied by great dejection of spirits; and the only amusement we could afford was obtained from the perusal of few volumes of history, poetry, or romance, which our landlady possessed, or occasionally borrowed for us. One day, I ventured to our landlady's parlour to make some inquiry. She was not within, but a new novel lay upon the table, and upon reading the title, which showed it was one highly praised by a review we had lately read, I was tempted to carry it to my mother. We began to read, and highly enjoyed the theft, when our landlady entered, and seeing our occupation, exclaimed, "Ah! I thought so: my dear Miss Scroope, I am sorry to deprive you of it, but this book belongs to a young man just

come to lodge and board with me; or rather it belongs to a friend of his, who is going out of town, and wants to take it with him." We expressed our vexation at not having time to read the last volume, and resigned the book.

A few minutes afterwards, Mrs. Bolton returned with another copy of the book, saying, "A civil, good-natured creature he is as ever lived! The moment he heard it was a sick lodger that was diverting herself with his book, he was so vexed; and when he had returned it to the young man who waited, he ran to the circulating library and fetched you another copy, and bade me say he was in no hurry to read it himself."

My mother expressed her gratitude, and inquired the name of her obliging fellow-lodger. Mrs. Bolton replied it was Carwell; that he was a clerk in some public office; and having been ill, had come to lodge at Chelsea for change of air. Many other trifling circumstances occurred relative to this young man, which, from

Mrs. Bolton's report, disposed us to think well of him; but two months elapsed, without our having seen or spoken to him.

My mother's ill health confined her to the two rooms that formed her sole abode, and her feebleness rendered my constant attendance indispensable. The only time I quitted her was for an hour or two while she slept in the afternoon; and at that period Carwell had not quitted the office, where his mornings were invariably spent. My walks in the garden were solitary, and my hours began to be clouded by indistinct apprehensions of what might be the termination of my mother's illness.

CHAPTER II.

THE cheerfulness which summer occasionally brings even to the sick and the suffering, had so much effect on my mother, that we shared the hope of her speedy recovery, and she felt a wish to enjoy the afternoon's sunshine in the garden, which was large, and now gay in the profuse bloom of a closing May. After some short trials of her returning strength, we repaired one fine Sunday to the garden, where the loveliness of the weather tempted us to remain so long, that a sudden faintness overcame my mother, and she suddenly sunk into my arms. We were at some distance from the house. I recollected, with terror, that Mrs.

Bolton was absent,—that as it was Sunday, no labourers were within hearing. Upon my own strength alone, therefore, was I to depend. I raised her in my arms, and proceeded a little way, when I found myself utterly incapable of going farther, and should have fallen with my beloved burden, if, from one of the neighbouring green-houses, a young man had not come hastily forward, and, with eager offers of assistance, borne my mother home.

The fainting-fit (for it was nothing more) had been brought on by over-exertion in her weak state, and my mother was soon sufficiently recovered to thank Mr. Carwell, whom the leisure of Sunday had tempted to spend his morning in the garden, so fortunately for us. My mother was pleased with his kind and unaffected manners, and remarked, after he was gone, the pleasing and intelligent expression of his countenance.

The next day Mrs. Bolton called, and said to my mother, " Mr. Carwell has been plaguing

me to tell him if there would be any harm in calling to ask how you were, and I told him you were always so lonesome, that it would be the greatest of charities, if he would come to see you." My mother answered, with some hesitation, that she was not lonely, but had no objection to see Mr. Carwell.

He called the next day, and finding my mother preparing to walk, he asked to assist in supporting her, and frequently afterwards sought and obtained opportunities of offering the same little service. Sometimes, while my mother rested on a bench in the garden, he offered to read to her, and often produced new and entertaining books that he had borrowed for us; and, at length, he regularly came on his return from the office, and spent the evening in our little parlour, sometimes in reading while we worked, in playing the flute, (a talen in which he excelled,) or in conversation; and this state of intimacy came on so imperceptibly and yet so naturally, that we should have fel

some surprise had any one talked of him as a new acquaintance. Yet we knew nothing of his previous life, his friends, or his prospects, and little of his actual situation. Perhaps some will blame my kind parent for the easiness with which she suffered Carwell to domesticate himself with us; but to those who then saw him, or heard him speak, such confidence will appear most natural. He seemed a thousand friends in one. I wished for nothing while he was present; I seemed to lose every thing when he was absent; and the universe became enchanted to me by that spell, so often dimly imagined before it is felt, so prized while possessed, so regretted when lost.

The short happy summer flew by, and the winter that followed would have had equal charms for us, had not my mother's complaints returned with the same violence. From Carwell she received the constant attention of an affectionate son, and really began to love him as such. He shared my fatigues, consoled me

in times of apprehension, and made our more cheerful hours doubly happy.

The slant yellow beam of a fine morning in January shone on our parlour-window when Carwell entered, saying, "To-day is a holiday, and Mrs. Scroope will take my arm and walk for half-an-hour, it is so fine."

I was just wishing it; my mother consented, and we walked for two hours. I see even now that garden, gay with crocuses and mezereon, —I yet feel that soft and spring-like air, and I hear the voices of those beloved beings, who have vanished from my view for ever!

When *all* we dread has fallen upon us—when the worst is come, there is peace. The feverish agitation of hope is past. We rest on our despair! All sorrow was far from my heart on that pleasant day, passed with the only friends I knew on earth.

I had never seen Carwell in such spirits. In thanking him for some little attention, my mother, with kindness, said, "Ah! Mr. Car-

well, what should we do without you?" He did not reply, but coloured, looked at me, and, after some hesitation, exclaimed, "Why should I not always be allowed to attend you? Oh, Mrs. Scroope . . . . if I dared . . . . if I could suppose . . . . is it possible——"

My mother first made me a sign to go, but afterwards stopped me, saying—"Stay, Charlotte; for all our sakes it is better to be frank. Mr. Carwell, I will not affect to misunderstand you; I have been very imprudent. If either Charlotte or you had the means of maintaining the humblest establishment, my first wish would be, that you should spend your lives together; but as things are, it would bring certain ruin on both. You are too poor to marry. Forget your indiscreet attachment, Carwell; and forgive me for allowing you so many opportunities of being tempted to this rash avowal."

Carwell's reply was long, eager, and animated, and to me seemed most eloquent and satisfactory. He urged that though we were

poor, we had the means of living in moderate comfort, and those means would not be diminished by uniting them; on the contrary, he would have a more ardent desire to obtain an independence, which he would be happy enough to share with me. His salary was nearly 100*l.* a-year, and this little income he improved by occasionally translating new French works for the booksellers, and by occupation afforded him by the proprietors of a popular daily paper.

Carwell was the natural son of a gentleman, in good circumstances, who had given him an expensive education, and who had frequently promised that the place he had procured should not be the only provision his kindness would afford. He had sometimes given him small sums of money, and hinted that when he could conciliate the mind, and gain the permission of his wife, (who was an heiress, and considerably his junior,) he would one day allow Carwell to appear as his son; but, though his brother

had long been dead, this illiberal woman disliked Carwell, because that mother had been the object of her husband's long and deep attachment in early youth.

The account of Carwell's present resources appeared to me at that time quite sufficient. I had been ever accustomed to a humble estimate of the necessaries and comforts of life; and to the sanguine imagination of my mother, the vague promises made to Carwell by his father, seemed to show an obvious and easy way for me to regain the place in society, of which my father's bankruptcy had deprived me. Her opposition was therefore every day given more faintly, and her invitation and welcome to Carwell grew every day more warm. The slight constraint, which his first avowal had produced, soon wore off, and was followed by greater intimacy and tenderness on all sides. It may seem strange to those who knew us not, that without any express declaration on his part, without any acceptance on mine, Carwell

should think himself authorized to ask my mother's consent to our union; but though neither had confessed it, both of us felt that we loved, and saw it was returned, without any sense of doubt, or any need of discussion.

As my mother felt her life grow more precarious, she could not sometimes repress the restless anxiety she entertained relative to my fate, when she should be no more. One evening, when she had dwelt upon it longer than usual, Carwell urged her not to give way to needless apprehension, but again implored her to afford him a right to protect me if I should lose her.

"If your father approves," said my mother, hesitatingly, "I think, Carwell, I dare give you my Charlotte. I know how kindly you will inherit my cares."

I sunk on my knees, and, bathed in tears, pressed with my lips the kind hand of her, who in the last days of her life felt no anxiety

on earth but what regarded me. Carwell knelt, wept, and thanked her with me. He earnestly swore to justify her confidence by making my happiness his eternal object. His true and warm heart spoke on his lips, and mine thanked him then, and thanks him now, though all has failed!

Through the mist of bitter tears the vision of this world rises as it then appeared to me.

CHAPTER III.

CARWELL's father consented to our marriage without any difficulty, and said he meant hereafter "to do something handsome" for him. He added, that his wife was very ill; he could not tease her at present; but they had not any children, and if he survived her, he would do more than we asked, which was a small addition to our income.

He presented a bank note of 50*l.* and promised to furnish the same sum yearly, but desired Carwell would not apply for it, as he did not wish it should appear upon his banker's book, which his wife sometimes examined; and

finally promised to accompany his son to visit me.

Though Carwell recounted the conversation with the utmost gratitude, and spoke of him with deference and kindness, I could not help feeling indistinctly that the parent was inferior to the son. The succeeding morning brought both to our door. Mr. Massingham (for Carwell bore his mother's name) was kind and cheerful, and appeared remarkably youthful in appearance for a man of fifty. He took pleasure in this circumstance; and twice asked me if he did not appear likely to live long, adding, that he took good care of himself, and that Mrs. Massingham, though hardly more than thirty, would not probably see another year. He repeated with complacence this gloomy augury, and evidently looked with pleasure to a future in which she was not to share. He desired Carwell, when he addressed him by letter, to direct to him at a certain coffee-house, as he did not choose his papers to lie at home;

and expressing himself with kindness to me, and with approbation of his son's choice, he took his leave.

We were soon after married, and with the utmost privacy. Mr. Massingham did not witness our union, and our mode of life continued nearly the same, except that his father's present enabled Carwell to provide many little comforts we could not otherwise have procured for my mother.

When Mr. Massingham returned to town the following Spring, he came to see us, and said he had thought of a plan that would be for our advantage, and that would afford him more of Carwell's society. This was that we should take a small house and let part of it as lodgings; and when he came alone to town, and found we had rooms vacant, he would lodge there. Two days afterwards, he expressed his approbation of a small house in Duke-street, Westminster, the back of which looked into the Park. We went to examine it, and the situ-

ation deserved the commendations bestowed upon it. Mr. Massingham bought the lease, and resolved to furnish it at his own expense. He took great pleasure in choosing the furniture, which was plain, but extremely good.

We took possession of our new abode, and spent six months in it,—months of unalloyed felicity! Mr. Massingham lodged with us during the meeting of Parliament. His wife did not visit London that year. During these months a great change had taken place in our mode of living: Mr. Massingham's habits were not only those of comfort, but luxury and expense. When any thing he required was not at hand, he usually desired us to get it at his cost; and insensibly our arrangements lost much of the frugality to which we had been accustomed in early life. Mr. Massingham frequently expressed regret as the time approached which he had fixed for his return to his country house, when he wished us to let the apartment he had occupied at a

diminished rent. We had had two other inmates of his recommending, but by the middle of June we were reduced to our own small family.

Towards the end of that month, I was one evening working at the window of our front parlour, when a gentleman passed slowly by, whose eye was caught by the words "*To be let*," which the window exhibited. After a moment's hesitation, he knocked at the door, and desired the maid to allow him to speak with the master of the house. Carwell was out, but she opened the door of the parlour where I sat.

Though naturally timid and averse to strangers, I could not account for a boding repugnance which I felt at the first view of this man, whose appearance was prepossessing in a remarkable degree. He was tall, and rather slender, with very dark eyes and eyebrows; his complexion was singularly pale, and he was slightly marked with the small-pox, but not

enough to disfigure his face, which might be termed handsome. His voice was soft and sweet, and his manner pleasing and gentlemanlike. He wished to engage a lodging, and asked permission to see that which we had to spare; I showed the apartment of Mr. Massingham, and was thus employed when Carwell returned home.

The stranger readily agreed to the terms we proposed, and added smiling, "Perhaps you will want references, in which case, I am sorry to say, we cannot complete our bargain, as I hardly know any body in England: I have just landed. I could refer you to many friends in Jamaica, but here I really have scarcely an acquaintance; perhaps, however, you will allow me to deposit a month's rent."

Carwell was pleased with his new tenant, who took possession the same evening. He complained of illness, and remained at home for some days. During that time he observed the remarkable privacy of our mode

of living, and appeared desirous to associate with us.

"After being confined in a ship to no very agreeable society, during a long voyage," said he, "and then forced into the bustle of noisy inns, you may suppose how I enjoy the peace of your house, and the comfort of your society. I am naturally shy; my health has suffered from the West-Indian climate, and I could not probably have found another house in London where I could have lived so much to my satisfaction."

"I should not have thought you naturally averse to society, or shy," said Carwell hesitatingly.

Mr. Parkhurst laughed. "That is, I must seem as if I *could* be an impudent fellow. You are wrong, I assure you, unless my wish to make part of your family may be taken as a proof to the contrary."

Carwell disclaimed all intention of expressing such a meaning. The dislike I had felt at

first sight of Mr. Parkhurst gradually wore off, and I recollected with wonder that I had entertained such a feeling. Yet Parkhurst was a person to make a strong impression, whether favourable or otherwise. He seemed to be a man of some talent, to have travelled much, and it appeared that he was gifted with great observation and quickness; yet we were surprised that he did not evince the slightest curiosity respecting England or its great metropolis, of which it was his fortune to be so insulated an inhabitant. He never went out except of an evening; never received any visitor; spent the morning in drawing or reading, and the evenings in walking, though his hours of exercise never commenced until the dusk. He frequently conversed with us, and was a very agreeable companion.

Though his dress and manner, and the ready punctuality of his payments, made us at first suppose him to be a man of fortune, a trifling in-

cident induced us to change our opinion. One day my maid-servant entered my room, holding some papers, which immediately caught my eye. They consisted of some masterly etchings, and one or two very humorous caricatures. On asking where she had obtained them, she replied, that when she went to arrange Mr. Parkhurst's room, these papers had been blown off the table, out of the window, by the current of air admitted by her opening the door; she had been into the street to seek, and was now going to replace them. I know not how it happened that I did not ask to see some more of his drawings, which these specimens had given me a great desire to do; but some days afterwards, it chanced that I was walking with Carwell, and we stopped to gaze at the window of a print-shop, where, to my great surprise, I saw engravings of those very drawings, and we concluded that our lodger was an artist, who had not sufficient dignity of mind to

avow his profession; and after pitying his weakness, we agreed to seem ignorant of his talent.

The winter approached with unusual rigour. My dear mother soon felt its effect; her distemper increased, and we saw there was no hope of her recovery. How often did she congratulate herself and me upon the safety and comfort of my situation,—upon the kindness of Carwell, and the happy circumstances that had bound our fates together. His constant and cheerful attention and improved fortunes enabled us to take from the death-bed of that dear parent all the aggravations that penury and loneliness add to death.

"Yes, Charlotte," said she one evening, "all earthly cares are vain, but apprehensions for your future lot would indeed make death painful, and how could I have escaped such feelings were you still unmarried? My only wish is gratified in this world, and in humble hope I seek another: I depart in peace."

She did depart, and I lamented her, and the years of happiness in which I had hoped to see her share—when I ought to have rejoiced that she was spared the overwhelming evil to come.

Sorrow and fatigue brought on premature sufferings, which deprived me of the hope of becoming a mother. Again—short-sighted and erring creature!—I ignorantly repined at the loss of an object which I thought might have supplied the void occasioned by my mother's death. For some weeks, languor and weakness rendered me incapable of quitting my bed-chamber; and during that period, Mr. Parkhurst suddenly quitted us, intending, as he said, to make a tour through France.

Soon after this, a letter arrived from Mr. Massingham, announcing the day he should take possession of his usual apartments, and begging me to purchase some additional furniture for his dressing-room: all preparations were made, and we sat down by a good fire on the 3d of January, to wait his arrival

"Our room looks so comfortable," said Carwell, stirring the fire, "that any man might rejoice to take possession of that arm-chair, even if he did not come out of a cold post-chaise of a stormy night, at the end of a long journey, like my father."—The clock struck six.—"I fear it snows," continued Carwell, opening the window. "He talked of being here at five."

"How can you expect," said I, "a person to be punctual to an hour named three weeks since?"

But hours passed—the watchman had called "one;" but Mr. Massingham did not arrive. This want of punctuality gave us little uneasiness; and though many days passed without hearing any tidings, Carwell waited patiently. Meanwhile, bills, accompanied by a request for immediate payment, were sent in for the furniture we had purchased. Carwell begged that the creditors would wait till the arrival of the real debtor. They complied, though not without reluctance. We were little

known, and some of our expenses, compared with our situation, must have appeared needless and extravagant. Carwell addressed his father at the Coffee-house where his letters had formerly been left, but the silence was prolonged till we felt exceedingly anxious, and even alarmed.

One night a double knock at the door interrupted our conjectures. We ran to meet Mr. Massingham, but found that our visitor was Mr. Parkhurst, who said he had completed his tour, and again wished to take possession of his former apartment. He did so, and again proved an agreeable addition to our society, but we were no longer disposed to enjoy it. The unceasing importunity of our creditors grew every day more distressing, and the silence of Mr. Massingham more inexplicable, until the circumstance of meeting with his servant gave us the melancholy assurance of his sudden death, which had taken place on the very eve of that day he had fixed for his journey to town!

Carwell grieved sincerely; but when the first shock had a little subsided, he was compelled to reveal to Mr. Massingham's man of business how we were situated, and the extreme embarrassment we suffered in consequence of the purchases made by Mr. Massingham's desire. The solicitor could give us little consolation. A will made at the time of their marriage, gave every thing to the survivor. Mr. Massingham had told us of this arrangement, which he had been at some pains to effect, never doubting that he should be the heir of the sickly and nervous heiress who was destined to survive him.

An appeal to her sense of justice became necessary—it was made; but ineffectually! Mrs. Massingham avowed her disbelief of the existence of such claim, and the only proof we could have produced must have been founded on her husband's letters to Carwell. Unhappily, these letters were interspersed with reflections upon her temper, and calculations as to

the duration of her life; and, altogether were so little likely to conciliate esteem to either party, that when the directions contained in them had been duly attended to, Carwell had considered it his duty to destroy them.

CHAPTER IV.

In this moment of embarrassment, Carwell confided our distresses to Mr. Parkhurst, and asked his advice, which he declined giving, as being unacquainted with the laws of England. He showed nevertheless great interest in all that concerned us, and lamented his inability to assist us. At last, he said that an expedient struck him, that might be of use to us, but perhaps it would not sound well, adding, "Did you ever play at games of chance, Carwell?"

"Only for trifles; but what of that?"

"Why, there are houses in London, I understand, where any body may go in and play; and a man with a clear head, who has studied

the chances of a game, has a manifest advantage over those who have not."

He said a great deal more which I do not recollect, in support and in explanation of this assertion; to which Carwell replied, that he disliked having recourse to such an experiment, even if he were convinced that it would prove successful.

"I am not," rejoined Parkhurst, "surprised; I should dislike it myself; but your situation seems to be desperate, and nothing better occurs. Nobody offers a man in full health a dose of arsenic; but if he is dying of an ague, he takes it as a medicine."

Our lodger concluded by proposing to teach Carwell all that was necessary for the prosecution of this plan; and at length prevailed. Carwell was successful beyond his most sanguine expectations, and obtained at his outset in this unhappy occupation enough to make its continuance expedient, if not desirable.

Still we were far from possessing the means of extricating ourselves from our irksome situation. The creditors seized every thing, and we withdrew to an obscure lodging, which Mr. Parkhurst had engaged for us and for himself. We were both struck by his kindness in resolving to continue with us in our reduced and inconvenient circumstances. He introduced another inmate as a cousin of his, an unfortunate young woman, the widow of a naval officer, who had left her in poverty. Mrs. Lyle, he said, was a West Indian, a stranger in England, and if Mrs. Carwell liked her society, he thought, in our solitary situation, that each would prove a resource to the other. The appearance of Mrs. Lyle was much in her favour; she was eminently handsome, cheerful, and obliging.

Our new habitation was very small, and detached from all others by a stone-mason's yard on one side, and by an extensive storehouse belonging to a cabinet-maker on the other;

a small court, surrounded by a high paling, concealed it from the road. And here for the first time — it was long before I could own it to myself — I was unhappy.

Let no one suppose that the loss of our better prospects had any share in my disquiet. Ah, no! I have proved that any dungeon shared with Carwell would have satisfied me: but Carwell was no longer himself; he was sad and disappointed; he was humbled by the blame he appeared to have deserved by living so much beyond his actual income; he regretted the hopes of independence which had lately appeared so well founded; he coveted that security and fearlessness of to-morrow which is perhaps the only real advantage of wealth; and he was almost impatient at my bearing our reverse of fortune with the indifference which a woman who truly loves will always feel to all evils but one.

His mornings were, as formerly, spent at the office; his evenings at play. Though suc-

cess was not constant, yet, upon the whole, he was a winner. In the short intervals these engagements allowed him to spend at home, he was sad and abstracted, though kind and affectionate, as it was his nature ever to be. He grew more intimate with Parkhurst, whose advice and opinions seemed to acquire more consequence in his eyes; and now that I had such frequent opportunities of hearing his opinions, I thought I perceived a hard and worldly turn of thinking in this man's mind, which recalled my early dislike.

At other times I accused myself of injustice towards the only friend that was left us, and feared that it was inspired by a narrow and involuntary jealousy of the influence he had gained over Carwell. These reflections occupied me so much, that it was some time before I had leisure to make observations on the character of the female companion whom circumstances had assigned me. When I did so, some part of her conduct struck me as singular

and imprudent. Her attachment to Parkhurst appeared greater than that which he manifested for her, and was mingled with a sort of fear which was incomprehensible. Their relative situations considered, his manner to her was indifferent and imperious, and it was impossible to avoid observing that their disputes were frequent and acrimonious.

When Parkhurst and Carwell departed to their evening engagements, I more than once saw Mrs. Lyle quit the house alone, after having changed her dress for one more ornamental; it was frequently late before she returned, and she appeared to wish these excursions concealed from all the other inmates of our dwelling. During the long and anxious hours of Carwell's evening absences, I involuntarily acquired the habit of watching every sound that was likely to precede his return, and the lightest touch on the latch of the house-door was sure to attract my attention.

It was this watchfulness that first led me

to observe the late return of Mrs. Lyle one night. The clock had struck two when she entered the house, apparently unaccompanied.

We usually dined early, and when our male companions left us, I repaired to my bed-chamber, which I seldom quitted afterwards. A wish to conceal my involuntary dejection first made me acquire this habit, which I was disposed to adhere to more rigorously as I began to suspect Mrs. Lyle of indiscretion. When I contemplated her splendid complexion, and the profusion of auburn curls which shaded her brow, and the slight and youthful figure which made her appearance still more striking, I wondered at her courage as much as I blamed her indiscretion.

My first impulse was to relate to Carwell my doubts of her character: but the fear that this might occasion a misunderstanding between him and Parkhurst induced me to delay this until I was finally satisfied that she was unworthy; and I also reflected, that it

was possible the circumstances which appeared suspicious, might, perhaps, occur from accidents; and, by premature accusation, I might have to reproach myself with having injured this young woman in the opinion of her only friend. Resolving, therefore, to exercise the greatest candour in judging this lovely young person, I patiently waited till further proofs should determine what I ought to think of her.

One day a knock at the door reminded me that our sole domestic had been sent on an errand, and, being the only person at home, I admitted the visitant; he proved to be a stout, vulgar-looking man, who, regarding me with a keen and scrutinizing look, said, "I suppose, my dear, your name is Wilson."

"No, Sir," I replied, involuntarily retiring from the familiar inquiry.

"Well, all 's one; then pray what *is* your name at present?"

"I fancy you mistake the house—this is Mr. Carwell's."

"Well, I want to speak a word with Mr. Carwell."

"He is out."

"No matter, I dare say he does not stay out very long when he has left such good company at home:—I'll stay for him."

Without farther ceremony, he shut the house door, and followed me into the parlour. My tremor was extreme, and the only conjecture I could form with regard to my companion was, that he was mad or intoxicated. In either case my situation was alarming. The object of my apprehension, after asking several frivolous questions, proceeded up-stairs, obliging me to accompany him. I hastened to offer him my purse, and any articles that I thought likely to be worth taking, conjuring him to leave the house, and promising never to inform against him.

"What! am I a thief? Come, young woman, this is a little too much;—don't be afraid—I have nothing to say to you; but you had

better take care how you conceal John Wilson; the Act says—"

"Believe me, I know no such person: you are mistaken, indeed you are."

He continued to open the drawers and boxes in my apartment, and then did the same in Mrs. Lyle's, and visited also the chamber which usually was Mr. Parkhurst's. That gentleman, however, had been absent some days, called to Liverpool by business, as he said, and his chamber, therefore, being obviously unoccupied, did not undergo the same scrutiny with ours and Mrs. Lyle's.

I was in too great alarm to remonstrate at the unwarrantable conduct of the stranger; but, as he had now been at least an hour with me, and his demeanour had been peaceable, a certain degree of self-possession returned to me, and I began anxiously to ruminate upon the chances of assistance.

The solitary situation of the house made it impossible for me to alarm the neighbours,

and our mode of life rendered the accidental entrance of any one very impossible. Carwell might not return till night, and the presence of Mrs. Lyle or the maid would be of little avail: it would be as easy to intimidate either of them as me.

Yet I had a latent hope that Mrs. Lyle, naturally so independent and imprudently hardy, would in some way effect my deliverance. In the midst of these reflections, a whistle from without drew my companion to the window, and a voice from below exclaimed, "Come down; he's off,—wrong for once."

In a moment I was again alone! The intruder withdrew as abruptly as he had entered. With inexpressible joy I beheld him shut the gate of our little court-yard, in company with another man, probably the person whose timely summons delivered me.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. LYLE heard the account of my strange alarm with great attention and surprise. Carwell, though grieved at the uneasiness I had suffered, accounted for it by supposing that my visitor had been a sheriff's officer in quest of some offender, with respect to whose abode or haunts he had been misinformed, and this account appeared so probable, that in a few days the whole circumstance passed from my mind.

The absence of Parkhurst had not freed Carwell from the effects of his counsel and example; I even imagined his restlessness and abstraction had increased latterly, and I longed

to make some effort to prevail upon him to return to our former way of life. But the fear of becoming importunate—of wearying him by thwarting and remonstrance, not only withheld me from this measure, but impelled me to disguise my disquiet and anxiety in his presence. "What does it signify how we live, while he loves me?" I repeated to myself a thousand times; and "What would any thing signify if he did not love me?"

A selfish feeling, soon to be justly and severely punished!

Those whose pecuniary resources are certain, however limited, are better able to provide for their expenses, and are less subject to exceed their means, than those in the habit of receiving larger but casual supplies. Though Carwell often possessed much greater sums than before the unfortunate period when Mr. Massingham first taught him to look to a higher prospect, his expenses were less considered and proportioned, and the other members of our

joint establishment, either from want of habit or prudence, seemed still more wanting in self-denial and arrangement.

A slight illness had confined me to the house for a few days. Its appearance at first was alarming, and it procured me the happiness of Carwell's constant attendance. He never quitted me; but, when I grew better, I one day insisted on his taking a walk. He left me; and it was not till night that I grew anxious at his protracted absence. Knowing that my sitting up would make him unhappy, and perhaps seem an implied reproach, I retired to rest about twelve, and being still weak from illness, contrary to my usual habit, soon fell asleep. How long my repose continued I know not; but I awoke with a start, and saw the faint moonbeams reflected on the floor, and heard the indistinct and mournful sound of the watchman's voice.

I sat up in my bed to endeavour to ascertain how much of the night was yet to pass. While

listening to the watchman's hoarse and drawling tones, the sound of footsteps and a light tap at the door announced to my anxious ear the return of Carwell. I wondered at my past anxiety, and joyfully went down the stairs to admit him. As he followed me towards the bed, I asked the hour, and looking back at the same moment, was struck with inexpressible horror and surprise by the discovery that he, whom I had thus admitted to my chamber, was not Carwell! The bright moonbeams shone on the face of a stranger! For a moment I gazed at him in unutterable dismay. For what purpose had he come? If to plunder, why had he peaceably announced himself, as an inmate might have done, by summoning one to admit him? If he brought intelligence of some fatal accident that had befallen my husband, why was he still silent?

"If you are in want," said I, "do not alarm me. In that drawer lies all the money I possess; pray take it and go."

"Nothing can be more graceful and natural than your alarm, Ma'am," said the stranger contemptuously: "but is it your charitable custom to guide housebreakers to your bed-chamber? Be contented with allowing me to suppose your compassion more limited. It is true, I came to pay my respects to your friend; but she has forgotten her engagement, and I have made a most fortunate exchange."

Saying this, he took off his great coat, and seemed resolved to remain.

"Oh, you are mistaken, indeed you are," I exclaimed weeping; "I thought it was Carwell."

"Why really, Ma'am, if this gentleman's hours are so very irregular, as your expecting him at five in the morning seems to imply, he cannot object to your receiving the consolations of a few select friends, and I am happy to produce my title to offer them, without putting you to the expense of farther sighs or tears."

He then deliberately produced a bank-note, which he laid upon the table.

"Oh! what will become of me! what shall I say to convince you that I am virtuous—that I expected my husband?"

My evident distress made the stranger pause; and after regarding me some moments with strict scrutiny, he replied—"If I have wronged you, why are you the companion, the inmate, of such persons as inhabit this house? Fly them—be wiser, and forgive my mistake."

He departed, and after a few minutes of inexpressible thankfulness at my escape from so strange and frightful a situation, I began to ruminate upon the probable causes of the stranger's visit. It was evident that Mrs. Lyle was his object, and that she had in some manner authorised his coming. What was I to think of such conduct, when I had so much reason to suppose that some attachment subsisted between her and Mr. Parkhurst?—was she then so lost and unworthy?

One thing was certain, she was an unsafe and disgraceful companion, from whom I ought immediately to separate.

I resolved, therefore, to persuade Carwell to leave the house, or break with our inmates directly. He did not return till morning, and then appeared disturbed and abstracted. After some reflection, I related the events of the night, to which he listened with pain and anger, and at the conclusion of the recital started up and quitted the room. He left the house soon afterwards, and I remained in doubt and agitation for some hours. I feared some dispute might take place between him and Mr. Parkhurst; and, in spite of her conduct, I felt some compassion for Mrs. Lyle, when I thought of the effect which the knowledge of her worthlessness might have upon the mind of her friend.

When my husband returned, he appeared still more suffering in mind than at his departure, and to wish to make some communication which was both painful and humbling to

speak of. He sat down by me, and after some internal struggle, exclaimed—

"Charlotte, you will think me inexplicable, perhaps unworthy; but do not think me indifferent to, or careless of, your fame and safety. Unhappy circumstances—accursed imprudence, compel me to associate with these persons in this dwelling. Forgive me, dear Charlotte, I suffer more, oh! ten times more, than you bear, with patience. For a time, bear the consequences of my madness; a day will perhaps come when I can loose these miserable ties, these bonds of Hell!" He struck his forehead, and paused.

I longed to ask what these ties were; why we were bound to these new acquaintances, of whose existence a few months back we were ignorant. Why should we fear to part with companions whom we despise? of what nature are these unwelcome and invisible ties? But the reluctance and struggle with which Carwell

spoke, awed me to silence. I only remembered that he suffered, and had begged my patience.

"Any thing," said I, "which you must bear, I will also undergo; but could you not continue the friend of Parkhurst without—" I was going to add the name of Mrs. Lyle, when Carwell interrupted me.

"Ask not for explanations," said he; "I cannot give them; but, Charlotte, believe, that when I cross your wishes, your just and reasonable wishes, my punishment is greater than my offence."

He ceased; and, grieved at having prolonged a conversation so painful to him by my question, I strove by a thousand assurances of submission and confidence in his will, to show that I was satisfied with his decision. And I thought I was satisfied. But the first moment of solitude I vainly considered what could be the motive sufficiently powerful to induce Carwell to continue our present situation, when a simple

determination of his might change it, and when he seemed convinced that he ought to do so.

At length my conjectures rested upon Mrs. Lyle. Was it possible that she could for a moment have seduced Carwell from me? She was beautiful, young, and indiscreet. Why should it be impossible to go from her society, if she had not enchained him by her attractions, or embarrassed him by promises? When this idea first presented itself, I endeavoured to banish it from my mind as an injustice to Carwell; but, in spite of every effort, it would recur, and every time with increased strength.

From that moment I lost all peace, and felt stupid from the idea of such a misfortune. I bewailed the necessity of existing after I had lost the heart of Carwell, and of existing in the society of the woman who had done me such an irreparable injury.

"And here, then," exclaimed I, "the affection which I reckoned upon for life is ended, and I can only look forward to a weary and

hopeless blank of years, spent in friendless reserve, in deep and unavailing regret!" Sometimes I resolved to show such coldness towards Carwell as should mortify, if it could no longer grieve him; sometimes to overwhelm him with the bitterest reproaches, and insist upon his parting with Mrs. Lyle, or with me. But in his presence I almost always mentally abjured my suspicions, and considered myself as the happiest of women.

CHAPTER V.

CARWELL'S manner continued kind as it had ever been; but he no longer appeared to enjoy his home. His cheerfulness and interest in the present had entirely forsaken him; yet my perpetual watchfulness could not detect any peculiar interest or partiality towards Mrs. Lyle. He seldom saw, hardly ever addressed her, and when he did, it was in terms the coldest and least distinguishing that courtesy could allow. When in company with both, therefore, my anxiety subsided, till I reflected how easily they might meet without my presence to impose restraint on their intercourse;

and, with this idea, all my discouragement and jealousy returned.

Even at this moment, I remember with horror the sufferings my suspicions inflicted upon me. To lose the heart of Carwell was to lose every thing; but, while still beloved, all may be borne.

Having occasion to go to a shop at some distance from home, I one day ventured out alone. Formerly, my husband had been the constant companion of my walks, but latterly he was so seldom at home, that I was usually solitary, and consequently rarely ventured to go out. On this occasion I had walked through two or three streets, when, at the corner of one, I suddenly was accosted by Mrs. Lyle. "This is a great event," said she, gaily; "you are so constantly at home, that you can hardly find your way about the streets, I am sure; and the noise and bustle of a crossing must bring on a fainting-fit. Where are you going?"

I mentioned my proposed walk, and she replied, "I declare I will go with you."

Nothing could be less agreeable than this proposal. I dreaded being seen with such a companion, and disliked the childish and inconsistent appearance of such behaviour in the eyes of Carwell—to have voluntarily chosen as an associate her from whom I had so eagerly besought him to separate me! I earnestly hoped we should not chance to meet him: I could not help examining the persons we passed; they were many, but had there been millions, to me all were alike unknown. In that great mass, where choice or accident had created so many ties, bound so many hearts and destinies together, the only link on which I depended, was perhaps already broken! Carwell, perhaps, had ceased to love me; and my successful rival was my only companion!

My eyes filled with tears; with some effort I dispersed them, and tried to attend to external objects. My casual glance rested on

a person whose features seemed familiar to me, who gazed in return with looks of surprise and earnest curiosity. An instant convinced me it was he whom I had admitted to my chamber on that night in which I had obtained full conviction of Mrs. Lyle's unworthiness. Though, in my present situation, there was no reason to be alarmed at the meeting, my deep and painful blush showed him that that humiliating circumstance was well remembered: he looked from me to my companion, who only acknowledged him by a slight and conscious smile.

He passed, we proceeded, and I rejoiced to find it was Mrs. Lyle's intention to leave me at the shop-door. In passing through the Park on my return to Duke-street, overwhelmed in anxious reflections, a hasty step immediately behind, induced me to turn my head. Again I beheld the stranger, who this time bowed and joined me.

Seeing that I walked with quicker pace, and

in much trepidation, he calmly said, "Do not be alarmed, you have nothing to fear from me, but listen patiently to what I wish to say. I have long sought, and been determined to find this opportunity of conversing with you. When I have spoken, and you have replied, it will depend on yourself whether I am to be in future a friend or a stranger, but hear me now?—Nay, I am resolved you *shall* do so; and remember," added he, smiling, "that you can have nothing to fear in broad day in St. James's Park, where a very moderate shriek would summon to your aid as many able-bodied men and vociferous females as any distressed lady need desire to collect."

There was something in the coolness and determination of the stranger's manner, as well as a tone of derision and superiority in his style of speaking, that awed me into compliance, and seemed so unlike the language of admiration or love, that I suddenly felt ashamed of, and anxious to conceal my previous ex-

pectation of being obliged to hear expressions of unwarrantable partiality. Making, therefore, a violent effort to subdue my perturbation, I replied with apparent calmness, that if he expected me to listen, I must request he would speak in as few words as possible.

" Whether you are deceived, or deceiving," proceeded the stranger, looking earnestly at me, " I cannot exactly ascertain. In either case, your fate is most pitiable. If deceived, I think it necessary to tell you, that you are linked with the basest natures, the most unworthy beings of creation: that your utter ruin must be speedy and complete: that if you do not separate from such companions, you will soon be included in their infamy. If I prove this to you, and you will directly leave them, the means to do so shall not be wanting, unclogged by any condition, or hope, on my part, which may be suspected of proving the latent motive of such an offer. I will, in that case, agree to let our acquaintance

cease the moment you accept the service I am anxious to offer, of freeing you from your present situation. If, on the other hand, your mode of life is the result of your free choice, I presume you are influenced, either by deep attachment to your companions, or that you conceive the means of living to depend on your pursuing such a course. The latter objection, I have already said, I have the power as well as the will to obviate."

"I know," said I, "the apparent folly of speaking so openly to an unknown person; but the kind intentions you profess, will excuse me, perhaps, for owning that I already know the faults of my companion, to whom I am *not* attached; but the will of one I am bound to obey makes all change impossible."

The stranger started.

"Then you know, you admit," said he, "the guilt, and yet persist to share it! Strange infatuation! And without the excuse of attachment! I could hardly have believed

it! And who could have the right to impose such a servitude? Who but those who find such youth, beauty, and apparent innocence, a powerful engine in their accursed hands! Let me beseech you, while the means of escape are yet available, to save yourself."

"Your statement of the dangers I have incurred," I replied, "seems a little exaggerated; but as I have now heard all, accept my thanks, and leave me."

"I will leave you—I must," replied he sorrowfully.—"Wretched girl! I leave you, I fear, to a horrible fate; but should repentance still touch your heart, know where to find one who will still be ready and eager to succour you."

He put a card into my hand, and hastily departed. I bent forward to read the name of my extraordinary monitor, but my arm was grasped at the same moment with so much violence, that the card fell from my hand; I raised my eyes, and beheld Carwell! But,

oh! how changed! Every feature expressed fury; his agitation was so great that he could not articulate; the paleness, and contraction round his mouth, the wild and menacing inquiry of his eyes, the trembling of his whole body, filled me with terror; and the consciousness of having at least permitted the parley of the stranger, though in so doing I could not accuse myself of intentional wrong, gave to my manner and countenance a timidity which I saw increased his anger and suspicion.

"You were not alone, Charlotte," said he, vainly trying to speak with calmness; "who was your companion? How long have you known him?"

"I do *not* know him; he has this moment given me his name."

The card was sought, but having been trodden into the miry ground by the passers-by, the name had become illegible. I besought Carwell to hear me patiently, and at length

convinced him that the meeting was accidental, and that the stranger's sole object had appeared to be a disinterested wish to detach me from Mrs. Lyle, of whose unworthiness he seemed to have the fullest conviction. But though Carwell seemed satisfied during our walk home, by my earnest and tearful protestations, I saw by his frequent recurrence to the subject, and by the gloomy thoughtfulness of his manner, and an occasional irritability in his way of conversing with me, that by one imprudence, reluctantly committed, I had in some measure diminished his confidence in me; and yet I derived comfort from the reflection, that if his affection for me had subsided, his interest in my conduct could not have been so warm.

Carwell desired I would not go out without his permission; to which I readily agreed. Parkhurst, whose absence had not been long, had now returned: I imagined that Carwell

had not acquainted him with Mrs. Lyle's indiscretion, as they appeared upon the same terms as formerly.

One evening we were sitting by the fire, when a knock at the door roused our attention. Parkhurst left the room, and in a few minutes returned, followed by three men, whom he announced as "friends."

Never shall I forget the fearful impression I received from their appearance and countenance. Each was remarkable; he who appeared to be the most considered of these companions was also the best dressed. The quality predominating in his countenance was assurance and fearlessness; his voice was loud, his deportment vulgar, and his smile malicious. Parkhurst addressed him by the name of Hargood. The second, Dunning, was tall, fair, and awkward; shabby in appearance, and his manner marked by meanness and timidity. He moved with constraint; never raised his eyes to the person who addressed him; spoke

with hesitation and embarrassment; and stooped much, as if with a wish to conceal his face and his feelings from all alike. Parkhurst welcomed the third by the name of Balthasar Levi; he was short, thick, and mean-looking, with small but penetrating eyes; his keen gaze seemed to search the heart; he spoke little; a cold and perpetual smile hung on his lip, yet neither indicated cheerfulness nor benevolence.

Carwell welcomed this company with civility, and seemed to exert himself to receive them with warmth and kindness; but I could see it was done with effort. Indeed, no person appeared at ease except Parkhurst and Hargood. I thought my presence seemed a kind of restraint; but the conversation, which at first was languid and full of pauses, soon warmed to eager dispute when it turned on questions respecting some game they had lately played, or seen played.

But I ceased to remark it: my whole attention was engaged by the strange contrast be-

tween Carwell and his society. From gazing on his animated and honest eyes, his bright complexion, and clear open forehead, shaded with black curling hair, I turned with sadness and apprehension to the mean looks, villanous expressions, and coarse manners of his associates; and wondered how Parkhurst, who was so unlike the rest, should have been the means of drawing my husband among them. After some melancholy reflections, I looked up, and encountered the bold examination of Hargood, which I saw Carwell was observing with impatient uneasiness.

"Charlotte," said my husband, "you are not used to our hours; my friends will excuse you—go to bed."

I retired, but our guests remained till dawn of day. Formerly, when we had made a new acquaintance, we spoke freely of his qualities, and the opinions we had formed respecting him; but Carwell never mentioned these men to me, and, I fancied, seemed afraid that I

should speak of them. Yet their visits were not unfrequent; sometimes they came together, sometimes severally, but always late at night; which last circumstance, joined to Carwell's evident wish for my absence, induced me to avoid being present.

Alas! had I then known how short was to be the time allotted us to spend together, all these reasons would have been insufficient to make me waste the hours in which I might still behold Carwell — still hear his voice.

I had for some time taken in needle-work from the shop to which I had gone on that unlucky morning when Mrs. Lyle had accompanied me. Having obtained Carwell's permission to take home some work which was completed, I went thither, and on my return found, in one of the streets I was obliged to pass through, a crowd collected round two drunken men who were fighting. The spirit which had first animated them seemed to have communicated itself to the

spectators. Their noisy discord rendered the way impassable; and, with reluctance, I found myself compelled to make a very long circuit to avoid them.

Extremely weary, and perceiving my walk nearly doubled, I proceeded slowly and sadly, thinking of the uneasiness my protracted absence would cause to my husband. Finding myself exhausted and ill, I could not resist the wish to rest, in spite of my anxiety to reach home. In passing a small shop, whose mistress stood at the door, I trembled and felt so faint that it attracted her notice; she kindly invited me to sit down, and offered a glass of water. An hour nearly had elapsed before I was sufficiently refreshed to proceed, and the day was declining when I reached my own door. I was eager to account for my long absence, and to appease the inquietude I knew Carwell must feel. My long and lonely walk through the thronged maze of London streets, caused my spirits to rise at the sight of that

humble dwelling, which contained my only friend and protector. In spite of the mystery and estrangement which latterly had diminished our happiness, my heart quickened its joyful beating when I reflected that I came home to Carwell.

CHAPTER VII.

I WAS surprised to see that our street-door was open ; and, upon entering, observed an unusual air of disorder and confusion. The parlour-door was also open, the fire extinguished, the table-drawers drawn out and placed upon the tables, and the carpet ruffled. Some written papers were dispersed on the floor; the chairs were placed in different directions, and the marks of muddy shoes were obvious. I concluded that our usual visitors had been there.

But why had their visit been so early, that they had parted before the accustomed hour of meeting? I called the maid—there was no reply. In the kitchen, also, the fire was ex-

tinguished. Carwell, Parkhurst, Mrs. Lyle, all were absent. Though I had frequently been entirely alone for many hours, there was something particularly dispiriting in the forsaken look of the house, which at the same time proved that it had so lately been occupied. In spite of my fatigue, I restored order, and prepared my solitary tea, though not without a hope that Carwell would join me before it should be drunk. The blazing fire (which is almost a companion to the lonely) restored my spirits, and after an hour or two I felt quite recovered.

The evening passed; and at midnight, finding none of our inmates return, I prepared some supper for Carwell, and having lighted a candle, retired to rest. He had for some time been in the habit of letting himself into the house by a key he carried with him; I therefore resigned myself to sleep, though not without vexation at the conduct of our only domestic in thus prolonging her absence.

My astonishment on arising the next morning, and finding every thing as I had placed it over night, was very soon mingled with great uneasiness. I was still alone! Carwell had scarcely ever passed twenty-four hours at once away from home. Something must have happened; but of what nature? Mrs. Lyle was also absent: Parkhurst's and the servant's rooms were unoccupied. The one same circumstance, whatever it might be, was very unlikely to influence the conduct of the whole family, whose pursuits and engagements were apparently different. Was it possible Mrs. Lyle had induced Carwell to leave me? Had Parkhurst and he been consequently excited to dissension? and what might have been the result?

These heart-breaking doubts weighed heavily on my mind, though I could hardly resolve to own to myself that I had admitted them. My suspicions concerning Mrs. Lyle had rarely returned since I had observed Carwell's earnest solicitude and jealousy regarding my con-

duct, and perhaps would not have recurred now, had my situation been less singular.

When I reconsidered the matter, it was more probable that Parkhurst had suddenly learned Mrs. Lyle's infidelity, and that his distress in consequence had obliged Carwell to remain with him. But Parkhurst's attachment did not appear of a nature to distress him deeply under such circumstances, and I had often observed that he must long since have entertained suspicions very little short of conviction. Alas! every cause of their absence but that which really existed suggested itself to me.

The truth, the woeful truth, was soon revealed! After vainly considering whether there was not some one whose advice I might ask, whose judgment might direct me; the certainty, that except Carwell, and the strange companions with whom he had linked himself, the whole universe was unknown to me, impressed me with a feeling of despondence that drew forth floods of bitter tears.

A solitary and fearful step ascending the stairs, and frequently pausing, at length raised the hope of my husband's return: I hastily dried my tears, and blushed for my past terror, which now appeared most childish to my eyes; I flew to meet him, but the person who had entered quickly endeavoured to retreat, apparently alarmed at the sound of my tread.

My eager pursuit was, however, successful; I found it was our maid. Instead of the excuses her conduct seemed to require, she seemed amazed at seeing me, and expressed surprise at finding me still there. When I began some reproof, "Surely, Madam, you do not know what has happened? Ah, Ma'am—when you were out, my master——"

It was my turn to gaze in terror and astonishment; I besought an explanation.

"You don't know then, Ma'am, that my master is taken up for forgery?"

For some minutes I stood unable to believe that I had really heard those appalling words.

At length she told me, that soon after my departure from home, the Jew, Balthasar Levi, had entered and sat some time with my unhappy Carwell; Parkhurst, Hargood, and Dunning were also there. While they were engaged in conversation, a ringing at the door called her down: when she opened it, three men rushed forward into the parlour. The alarm was general; all endeavoured to escape except Carwell. The only persons who succeeded in doing so were Hargood and Parkhurst.

The officers searched every part of the house for notes,—she could not tell with what success, as, after they had searched her, she had departed, and had not ventured to return until the moment of our meeting, when she had come to carry off her clothes. I listened to this appalling information with a sick feeling of horror, which deprived me of the power of utterance. A few months back my confidence in Carwell's character would have led me boldly to aver and trust in his innocence; but now,

the recollection of a thousand trifling circumstances, in spite of my wishes, obliged me to dread the justice of the accusation.

"Oh, then," I exclaimed, in the bitterness and despair of my soul, "it is possible! the sense of integrity is lost to that kind and feeling heart! the pride and confidence that cannot abide with remorse—the vague hope and expectation from the future, which is the portion of those to whom the past offers no self-reproach, must never more be the lot of Carwell. If his misconduct does not endanger his safety—still, to obtain even momentary peace, even amidst years spent in the stainless fulfilment of every duty, the *past* must be absent from his mind! self-esteem he must never more know! And how will he bear his deserved abasement?"

Having learned from the girl whither the officers of justice had taken Carwell, I hastened to him. The difficulties of obtaining admission were rendered more formidable by the

contemptuous familiarity of those who profit by the sorrows of their captives.

At length I reached the dreary chamber in which he was confined. Knowing how much my sorrow would add to his, I made an effort to suppress the sensations his situation called forth, and in some measure succeeded.

"Charlotte," he exclaimed, "you know all —the worst!—I endeavoured to spare you the knowledge of my guilt and my disgrace, and I have often seen with pain that the means I took were the cause of another affliction. You sometimes thought my reserve proceeded from estrangement and want of confidence. Will it not be a harder trial to learn that your only friend and protector is—a felon?"

"Oh, Carwell! think no more of the past; by whatever means you were betrayed into acts so foreign to your nature — you repent them, I know you do; if we escape the present danger, your future life will be what it always would have been but for—'

"No," interrupted my husband; "I must not deceive myself. Whatever my companions may be, and whatever reprehension they may deserve, more principle, more firmness on my part, would long since have freed me from the participation of their fraudful secret, from their ruin, disgrace, and, perhaps, from their—punishment." At the last word he hesitated; I saw he feared to suggest an idea, the horror of which I might not be able to sustain.

I felt the blood curdle round my heart, and my lips parched by mental fever. The gloomy walls seemed to rock around me, and it was some time ere I could inquire what method we must take to secure professional assistance. Carwell spent some time in endeavours to console me, and to prepare my mind for the worst. But the generous devotion which led all his thoughts to devolve on my suffering, encreased my misery. How many hours did I spend in mental prayer, yet prayed so distractedly, that though my heart was full of the sentiment

of supplication, I knew not the words I used!

When the day closed, the pause of life which night seems to bring, allowed my mind to dwell without interruption on its distracting fears. It seemed as if any human being, however uncongenial, would have been welcome, if he broke the dismal silence, and spoke of any subject but that on which I dreaded to think, yet thought incessantly. The weary night seemed endless; and when towards morning I sunk into disturbed sleep, the horrors of reality pursued me. I saw the crowded court—the accusing witnesses—they seemed to multiply every moment. *His* witnesses do not appear when called—the judge rises to pass the sentence—I feel it will be unfavourable—it rings in my ear—and I awake at my own shriek of despair!

Then, as, the pale streaks that precede the dawn appeared through the narrow window that faced my solitary bed, I started to think

that that very day would clear away some part of the obscurity which hid the future—that very day might perhaps bring some encouragement which I might trust to, or some intelligence which would kill every hope—that day I might learn that few more were destined to rise for Carwell!

CHAPTER VIII.

CARWELL bore with firmness the suspense of his impending fate, and exerted himself to prepare for his defence. Before his prison-doors opened to admit me every morning, I felt as if I expected some great event to have passed since I had quitted him the preceding evening; and yet, as soon as I was there, what passed without in that busy (and to us hostile) world, seemed still more important and menacing; and every word that met my ear, however vague—every countenance that caught my eye, however unknown and vacant, seemed fraught with a fearful augury, and involuntarily

I accepted their fancied import as ominous of our fate.

But, as the time approached, I grew more calm; the certainty that we must undergo this trial, and that our destiny would take its course, brought with it that courage, or rather submission, which those attain who have passed the first conflicts which the aspect of misfortune will excite, even in the most resolute.

One evening, at the hour when all visitors were dismissed from their imprisoned friends, I found myself followed by a beggar, who did not however accost me till I had reached a high wall at the foot of which lay my way. Though the place was rather lonely, a few words, which I supposed a demand for charity, made me pause, and recognize Parkhurst—that fatal friend who had been the cause of all our evils. He was so well disguised, that, had he not called me by my name, I should not have known him. "You are free, you are fortunate!" I exclaimed, "and your friend!—"

"You think it, then, my fault that Carwell was discovered; that he is now in prison. He would have been there long since had I not taught him the means of living: I divided the risks, as well as the profit, of a hazardous trade. But that signifies little now. He is not in the danger you think; but if you have a mind to be of use to him, and perhaps to all of us, why don't you apply to your friend?"

"And who is my friend? I have none but Carwell. We were alone in the world,—we needed none, when an evil fate first made you known to us."

"This is not a time for affectation and deceit. If you really want to help Carwell, why will you not apply to young Dudley? Do you suppose I did not hear of his quitting Jane Lyle for you?—of his mistaking your room for her's?"

"I was about to protest my ignorance of the meaning of his first question; but his last

words explained it. I was equally surprised at his knowing a circumstance which it was so much Mrs. Lyle's interest to conceal, and at the indifferent air with which he alluded to it; but not knowing how far he was informed as to her conduct, I hesitated, as I thought he loved her, and knew that she feared him.

He appeared to read my motive, and laughed scornfully. "Oh! our friendship will not be diminished: I know every thing. She is not the less useful for being false, and she is as much in my power as I am in her's. But all you need know is Dudley's direction; there it is,—he may help Carwell for your sake."

He gave me a card, and turned down an alley I had not observed. I repeated the substance of this conversation to Carwell, and he was greatly irritated at the advice Parkhurst had given.

The time of trial came on, when Carwell was to stand before the scrutinizing eyes of contemptuous fellow-creatures! Though the

time is come when I am convinced that it is a small thing to be judged by man's judgment, and though the world has receded from my view, the pains it inflicted that day are fresh in my memory.

The court was crowded to excess. At first I saw nothing distinctly. A multitude, a confused noise of voices, a kind of hostile sound, was all I perceived; except that Carwell, though pale and sad, was composed. A slight alteration of features and look of anxiety appeared when his eyes turned, as they frequently did, towards me.

The dread of destroying his self-possession, if I allowed him to see the anguish I suffered, assisted me to support myself; and except when, by an accidental movement, the sound of his fetters struck my ear, or that a new witness prepared to give his testimony, my resolution was equal to its trial. The examination of the witnesses gradually led to the disclosure of the past life and late occupations

of those whose companionship had produced our ruin.

Parkhurst had originally been apprenticed to an engraver: he was endowed with considerable talents. A love of amusement and idleness had first led him to contract debts which he was unable to pay. Years of expedients to escape the consequences of his profusion, rendered him callous to disgrace, and willing to gratify himself in spite of honour and justice. His seclusion, when he first lived with us, proceeded from a justly-founded alarm, that the officers of justice had traced his haunts; and he hoped that the abandonment of his associates and customary resorts would mislead them. Mrs. Lyle had been his companion for three years, and an able assistant in his nefarious schemes: his pretence of being a West Indian was untrue. He had latterly carried on an extensive circulation of forged notes. Upon the share Carwell should be proved to have taken in this transaction his life would depend.

I cannot recount all the circumstances of the dismal scene. Suffice it to say, that the evidence bore less hard on Carwell than sometimes, in the agony of my mind, I had anticipated. His life was saved! He will live! In the transport which that heavenly certainty gave me, I overlooked all the other consequences of his sentence; for he was not acquitted! Carwell was transported for life!

"We shall not part, Charlotte," said he, and, for the first time, his eyes filled with tears. Like me, his first feeling was inexpressible joy that we were still together. As I followed him from the bar, another prisoner was brought up for trial—the miserable Dunning. The haggard anxiety of his countenance, the pale contraction of his features, told me how fatal the issue of that day would prove to him, and I inwardly blessed my fate in shuddering thankfulness.

How lightly we descended from that scene of fearful suspense! and when we entered that dark and confined apartment which I had so

lately feared might prove the last residence of Carwell, it appeared radiant with hope and pleasure; we might now speak and think of the future—of *our* future. And now our confidence was restored and entire; and we spoke freely a thousand thoughts, which were hitherto repressed from the fear of adding to each other's distress.

Already I thought on plans for our subsistence in those new and unknown climates where we were to reside. For some days my husband seemed happy; but afterwards, the thoughts of his actual situation depressed and shocked him: the loss of character, the ill opinion of all who had formerly known him, every thing that was degrading in our present or future state, returned to his mind after the first joy of escape.

But I had suffered so much during the suspense of his fate, that my joy was scarcely shaded by our expected degradation and banishment. If Carwell was to be my companion,

what did it signify who the others might be? If we were together, it signified little in what place. I collected the small remains of our property; all sources of future employment were cut off. The shop, which had formerly afforded me occupation, would no longer trust me with work.

Our late landlord having purchased our furniture, and at a higher price than I had reason to expect, I began to hope we should have enough to provide decently for the comfort of our voyage, not doubting that, when arrived at the place of our exile, our industry would supply the means of living. I hastened to communicate this good fortune, and my calculation of the use to which it was to be applied, to my husband. He did not immediately reply, and, thinking he doubted my accuracy, I wrote down the whole, and kneeling down by his chair, after reading it aloud, turned to hear his answer. Never shall I forget the expression of his face! never had I seen it

so full of sorrow! He could not utter a syllable; his eyes were tearful, and his whole frame shook with inexpressible emotion.

From some words that had occasionally dropped from him, I fancied that his distress proceeded from his sorrow for our degraded state, and his impatience under the weight of public ignominy. "Oh, Carwell! beloved Carwell!" I exclaimed, "forget the past: if man cannot forget this offence, we shall feel that sincere repentance will obtain a higher pardon. Surely, even in disgrace, it will be sweet to know, that while we suffer the penalty of past faults, we have ceased to merit it; and that our patient endurance of the reprobation we no longer deserve, will be acceptable to Him who has said, that when we do well and suffer, we are approved. You are young; years even of youth remain for you, in which to win another reputation; years of cheerful industry, of humble integrity, will gain in our distant retreat the esteem of all who know

us, and erase the memory of a fault committed in early youth."

"Say no more, oh, Charlotte! say no more: little have I deserved that you should share such a fate as mine," said Carwell, mournfully: "your generous courage, your uncomplaining affection, merited higher hopes — a better object. Even now I should have been too happy—a thousand times too happy—but it cannot be—take courage for yourself, but—" He was silent after vain efforts to speak farther, and we were soon after interrupted.

CHAPTER IX.

A NOTE was brought to me one morning, containing an earnest request that I would accompany the bearer, to see a dying person. The writing was that of Mrs. Lyle: the terms implied haste and distress; and though Carwell was scarcely willing I should attend the summons, he at length permitted me to go. The boy who brought the note said, it came from a lady who was very ill at his mother's. I followed him to a house of shabby and melancholy appearance in a narrow lane near the Seven Dials. A bell fastened to the door of the shop gave notice of my entrance, and a shrill voice from above inquired who was there.

My guide answered, "The lady Mrs. Thompson wished to see;" and a large woman, with a face which seemed flushed by intemperance, and marked by the lines drawn by habitual ill-humour, appeared, to usher me up-stairs.

She led to the garret of this forlorn abode. On a humble and curtainless bed lay a figure which, in spite of the changed appearance, I recognized to be Jane Lyle. She seemed to be dozing heavily, and did not notice my entrance. My companion, observing this, would have roused her, had I not earnestly besought her to forbear, adding that I would wait. She replied roughly that I might, but she could not, and hastily departed.

I surveyed the apartment. On the bare deal table stood bottles containing medicine, and a broken cup and plate holding food and water. A gay-looking shawl hung half over the dusty mirror. A mask and domino lay at the foot of the bed; on the floor, which was strewed with torn papers, there still remained a wreath of

artificial roses and a military feather. The bright light which beamed upon the bed had been partially excluded, by hanging a handsome pelisse across the curtainless window. I could not reconcile these contradictory appearances of penury and expense, nor conceive why Mrs. Lyle had summoned me to her. I looked on her face; it was flushed and changed by illness, but still eminently lovely, though her hair hung in tangled masses from beneath her cap, which had been almost displaced from restlessness.

She moaned in uneasy slumbers, and occasionally pronounced indistinct words. At length, starting up, and clasping her hands, "Have none of you sent for Charlotte Carwell?" she exclaimed; "I *must* see her." I arose, and, approaching the bed, asked what I could do for her. "A great deal," she replied; "but are we alone?"

When convinced that no other person was present, she paused, apparently from weakness,

and at length drew a small box from under her pillow, which she gave me, saying, "Destroy these papers—they are forged notes; take them away, for here I am watched, and burn them when you get home. This fever saves me, perhaps, from a worse death. Tell Parkhurst I forgive him—farewell!"

I told her I would return the next morning. "It will be too late," said she; "still I wish you better fortune."

The unfeigned sympathy she saw in my countenance evidently softened her; she pressed my hand, and tears filled her eyes. "You can do nothing for me, Charlotte; I am past all earthly help, but I may have the pleasure of speaking frankly to you. For once I need not feign; I will tell you *some* of the past, and shall hear no revilings from you—you who are so different from all I have known for years! perhaps I shall suffer less if I confide in you.

"My first recollections are of a boarding-school, from whence I was taken at the age of

fifteen by a gentleman, whose natural daughter I was supposed to be; the happiness of my life was not increased by the translation. Colonel Neterville was infirm, gouty, and ill-humoured; his only amusement was cards; his companions were equally uncongenial to me. When I had made his tea and arranged his pillows, he was rather anxious to be rid of my presence, and often reproached me with the misconduct and faults of my mother, of whom my faint remembrance only gave the idea of a showy and noisy female, who had alternately beaten and caressed me, many years since.

" Such a life was not calculated to improve the mind or afford happiness; all the comfort I derived from it was my escape from the restraints of a boarding-school. My days were spent in conversing with two maid-servants and their friends, or lovers; in gazing out of the windows, reading novels, and in a sort of dreamy listlessness, which, if not happiness, was *ease*,

and what I was not destined to enjoy long on earth.

"From Cork, where we spent several months, we removed to Dublin; and the muttered compliment, or fixed stare of the young men I passed in the street, soon taught me to believe that I was not without attraction. I could not walk out without being followed by several, and I soon learned to look round with pride and exultation to see who gazed at a shape which I then thought unequalled,—and which will, in a few days, feed the worms.

"One day a large bull-dog flew at me, and was beaten off by a young man, who had for some time constantly passed below our windows several times in the day. I expressed my thanks, which led to acquaintance first, and afterwards to attachment. We soon made regular appointments when I walked out, and at length we found his visiting me at home was not impracticable. A small room on the

ground floor, almost detached from the house, was my apartment, and Parkhurst found it accessible by getting over the garden wall. Colonel Neterville was too infirm to leave his dressing-room, sometimes for months; and as I offered no remonstrance to the maid-servants when they received their friends, they did not object to my using the same privilege. Any one might have foreseen some of the dangers resulting from these stolen interviews; but few, indeed, could have foretold all the guilt and misery into which they were destined to plunge me.

"I knew nothing of my fatal companion. Flattery and protestations of attachment made up the whole of his conversation, and he was remarkably incommunicative of all that related to his situation or connections. Indeed, he never made the slightest allusion to either; and I had no curiosity, and thought too little of the future, to speculate on how it was to be spent. In youth, the present is all; and since

I had been beloved, an interest had arisen that made me willing to bear the ill-humour of Colonel Neterville and the dullness of my situation, without the repining and ennui I had at first given way to. All might have long continued as it then was, but for an unexpected incident.

" In general, Parkhurst's visits took place in the dusk of the evening, and lasted till midnight. One fine summer day had completely closed, when a hasty rap at my window announced my usual visitant. As he entered, I perceived unusual marks of perturbation in his manner, and absence of mind when I addressed him. After a moment's hesitation, he said he was likely to leave Dublin shortly, and that he wished me to accompany him. I was startled at the suddenness of, though not averse to, the proposal; and I desired time for deliberation. At this moment I heard the servants summon me to Colonel Neterville, who, being very unwell, detained me till nearly two

in the morning, when, being inclined to sleep, he dismissed me. Parkhurst was gone, but had left on the book I was reading when he entered, a slip of paper, on which was written, 'You will hear from me shortly by a friend; trust him—farewell!'

"When I attended Colonel Neterville in the morning, I found him much worse; he begged me to write to his medical attendant, and request him to call. This gentleman was a surgeon of eminence and his intimate friend. Being highly reputed for skill, benevolence, and agreeable conversation, he was known in, and welcome to, the first society of Dublin; and equally known to the indigent and helpless for his charity, and for the gratuitous exertion of his skill, which had saved thousands from death, who could offer no other compensation than their prayers and gratitude to Heaven and him. He was unmarried, and about fifty years of age; his mode of life was plain, and called by some penurious: he lived alone in his house,

with one female servant; generally dined with some friend, and once in every fortnight with a club, where his society was much prized. I am thus particular in describing his habits, and the estimation in which he was held, that you may the more easily conceive the astonishment and horror we felt, when Colonel Neterville's servant brought back my note, saying, that 'Mr. Evans had that morning been carried to prison, accused of the murder of his maid-servant.'

"The reiterated exclamations and incredulous questions of all present could elicit no explanation. Another friend of Colonel Neterville's happening to come in, and seeing our dismay, offered to go to Mr. Evans's house and obtain some details and ascertain the truth of this distressing report. The accounts he returned with were these. Mr. Evans had met a friend a few days before, who reminded him that Friday the 15th was the day the club he belonged to was to meet. He ex-

pressed regret that he should not on that day be able to join them, as he had an appointment in the evening. His friend endeavoured to change his resolution, and at length suggested that he might dine at the club, attend his appointment, and afterwards rejoin his friends; a proposal with which, after some hesitation, he complied. On the day fixed, he arrived at the club, and dined there, apparently in high spirits; and to the great regret of the party, retired soon after, saying he would return. He *did* return—but not as he had departed. He was pale, grave, and so pre-occupied, that an evidently powerful effort seemed to be required when he attempted to take any part in the conversation. His change of manner struck all present; and one who sat near him observed that some spots of blood were visible on the sleeve of his right hand. The nature of his occupation while absent was supposed by the observer to have been a dissection, which it was impossible to

delay; his profession accounted for the appearance, and warranted such a conclusion. Some circumstances in the course of the evening were recollected by his neighbours which excited suspicion. The servant of a neighbour had, about half-past seven, seen Mr. Evans's maid looking out of the parlour-window on the ground-floor; she appeared well, and looked cheerful: twenty minutes afterwards the same servant again looked towards Mr. Evans's house, and saw him quit it; the maid was not then at the window. A few minutes afterwards, the domestic of another neighbour went to the house, with the intention of borrowing some article in household use, and, seeing the door ajar, entered, called the maid by her name, but receiving no answer, proceeded to seek her, and was startled at finding her extended lifeless on the parlour-floor! The body, still warm, bore the impression of some blows, inflicted apparently by the butt-end of a pistol on her head and breast; the pistol lay

by her; it was one belonging to Mr. Evans, and its fellow still hung over the chimney-piece. But the most remarkable circumstance was, that a vein in each arm and in her temple had been opened, and with so much skill, as to make it quite impossible to believe it done by one ignorant of surgery. More than one person had made corresponding observations as to the hour that the maid was last seen in life. The entrance of Mr. Evans, and the time of his arrival at his house, agreed with the report of the time he left the club, and the peculiar state of mind he appeared in while there.

"No other person had been seen to enter or depart; no property was missed, no furniture disarranged; the victim and the instrument of her death were all that testified against the murderer, and all circumstantial evidence seemed to point out Mr. Evans as that murderer.

"He did not fly, and was taken to prison;

his friends hastened to offer their assistance, and the greatest interest was excited by them to obtain the remission of his punishment; for in spite of his character, and the improbability of his committing such a crime, few ventured to assert their belief of his innocence, though he fervently and constantly averred that the accusation against him was unjust. He stated, that on the fatal night, he had returned home for the purpose of attending to a preparation which could not be delayed. He found the house-door open, and that of the parlour, which he entered, intending to reprehend this apparent carelessness in his servant, when he beheld her stretched on the carpet. His first impulse led him to render his professional assistance, for she was yet alive, though evidently dying and speechless. He opened a vein in each arm, and finding but a few drops flow from the wounds, he opened another in the temple. All was without success—she gave a long and struggling sigh, and expired! All this had passed

so quickly, that, till she was actually dead, it had not occurred to him, that if found near the corpse he might be suspected of having been a murderer, and he paused to consider how to act; no person had seen him enter, he believed, and he imagined, that, if he retired undetected, the real murderer would perhaps be taken, and at all events he would never be suspected; he laid her in the same position he found her, and hastily left the house, disturbed and undetermined. On his return at night, he found the house occupied by the officers of justice: his embarrassment betrayed his being already acquainted with the events of the evening, and his unsuccessful attempt to appear uninformed of it first drew suspicion. All thought his statement improbable, and he was fully committed for trial.

"The only effectual mode of defence would have been to prove an alibi; but the very short space of time which had elapsed between the presence of the woman at the window and

the moment when Mr. Evans was seen to quit the house, his brief absence from the club, and the discovery of the corpse, were all circumstances that told to his prejudice. Even those, who by long friendship, benefits received, or love of his society, were induced to serve him with the most anxious zeal, in secret considered him guilty; and when the sentence of the jury pronounced him so, heard it with sorrow unmixed with surprise.

"He submitted to his fate with fortitude and calmness, and died protesting his innocence, and the truth of the statement he had given. All the society of Dublin heard this event with the deepest interest, and none lamented it more passionately than Colonel Neterville. Even I forgot, for a short time, in my sympathy, the devouring anxiety with which I awaited the return of Parkhurst, which, however, did not take place, though many weeks had passed since his departure; neither had I received any letter or message

which might enable me to look forward patiently to the period which was to clear up my suspense.

" In proportion as the shock of the event which I have been detailing faded from my mind, my own anxieties recurred more frequently, and Colonel Neterville's increasing illness made him impatient at my mechanical attendance and pre-occupied manners. One day, while sitting in his dressing-room, a clergyman of the name of Maldon, who frequently used to visit us, called on Colonel Neterville. He seemed agitated, and on being questioned by the latter, said, ' I know not whether you will grieve or be relieved by what I am going to tell you — I should think the latter; you will be glad to learn our friend Evans was innocent of the crime laid to his charge.' After a pause caused by the exclamations of our surprise, Mr. Maldon went on. ' I was going to bed last night, when a person I did not know, called to ask my attendance on a young

man who was dying and wished particularly to see a clergyman. He had expressed the wish before; but always when any one offered to gratify it, desired delay. On this evening several fainting fits had convinced him that his end was approaching, and that no time was to be lost. My informant added, that, knowing my residence was near, and that he was my parishioner, he had resolved to call me. I directly accompanied the person to an apothecary's shop in Eccles-street, and was shown to the bed-side of one of his apprentices —the young man who had desired to see me. I found him languid, but in possession of all the faculties of his mind. He told me that he was in the last stage of a consumption, rapidly brought on by distress of mind and self-reproach, in having suffered an innocent person to die, who might have been saved by his testifying the truth.

"'I have a friend,' said he, 'with whom I lived for two years in the strictest intimacy.

We did not conceal our faults from each other; and though I did not at times see those faults with much self-reproach, I now feel how reprehensible our conduct often was. He was also an apprentice, but in a different family, and to another trade. Each belonged to so large an establishment, that we did not reside with our masters, but rented a lodging in the neighbourhood, and gave our daily attendance to our employers. When their shops closed, we generally spent the evening together. On Friday the 15th of last June, I had been for two days so unwell as to have my attendance dispensed with. Towards evening I arose, and about half an hour afterwards my fellow-lodger entered; he appeared anxious and confused, and opened various boxes, and seemed preparing for a journey. I grew curious, and made inquiries, which he seemed desirous to evade. At length he said, if I would take an oath not to betray his confidence, he would confess the cause of his embarrassment. Most

rashly—most madly—I agreed. I knew not, could not know, the deep repentance, the guilt, and painful struggle to which this oath would bind me. I swore to keep his secret: he then told me that he had been dining with some friends, and having drunk enough to elevate his spirits, had walked out. In going on the pavement, his foot slipped, and he was near falling. As he recovered himself, he heard a laugh, and some words uttered in derision by a female voice, and, looking towards the house, beheld a handsome young woman at the window of a room on the ground-floor: the door of the house was open; he entered the room, and on some words passing, he was irritated, and, seizing a pistol which was hanging over the chimney-piece, struck her several times. She tried to wrest the pistol from him, but received a blow on the temple which felled her to the ground, and in a moment he saw she was expiring! Distracted with terror and remorse, he ran from the house; the horrid

scene he had witnessed completely restored his senses, and he quickly decided how to act; he ran to the quay, and finding a vessel preparing to sail, engaged a passage, and returned to our lodging to get together a few necessaries for his voyage. Having imparted this fearful secret, he bade me a hasty adieu, and, directing me what he thought it advisable to say when his friends should inquire after him, departed for ever.

"'Though struck with horror,' continued the young man, 'at the brutality of his conduct, and filled with vague alarm at the researches that might be made, I was far from foreseeing what was to ensue. In a few days the news of Mr. Evans's committal reached me; but, knowing the truth, I never doubted that he would be able to prove an alibi; and I gave myself little concern at a mistake which would facilitate the escape of my unworthy friend. The condemnation of Mr. Evans fell on me like a thunderbolt, and I felt for the

first time that it was a duty to clear him from unjust suspicion. But the solemn oath I had taken, the curses I had voluntarily invoked on my own head were I to break it, made me pause. Though I had reason to think the real criminal had reached a place of safety, I was not sure of it. I might be taking his life by confession, and I must break my solemn and voluntary oath. I recollected the eagerness with which I had pressed for his confidence, the earnest curiosity with which I had sought a secret which was now to cost me so dear! I dared not even indirectly seek counsel on the doubts which beset me, lest the mere inquiry should betray my knowledge of a circumstance which occupied so much public consideration. When the master and friends of the real murderer had sought for intelligence at his lodging, and from me, as his companion, that might account for his departure, they only connected the event with the extravagance and idle habits they had seen grow upon him latterly, and

none ever thought there was a deeper and more horrible cause of his flight. For me there was no longer peace on earth; from the day Mr. Evans perished, his upbraiding phantom seems to pursue me night and day, and, in spite of my oath, I cannot leave the world without doing justice to his memory.'—

"'The young man concluded his communication, and,' continued Mr. Maldon, 'after some discourse and endeavours on my part to calm his mind, I retired, and on calling this morning I learned he expired at daybreak.'

"Colonel Neterville was much affected by what we had heard, and again deplored the unjust sentence which deprived his friend of life, and, for a time, of reputation. Yet Evans was blameless, and there was little need of lamentation. Time passed, and my father grew daily more infirm and irritable, and my life, deprived of the interest which, for some months, the attachment of Parkhurst had lent it, became most wearisome.

"Among Colonel Neterville's visitors was a merchant, who, having made an easy fortune, retired from business. He was between fifty and sixty years of age, with a fair character, apparently even temper, and some taste for vulgar display. He manifested towards me a kind of jocular and paternal attention, which might have long continued without exciting any reflection in my mind; but one day my father informed me that Mr. Rodney proposed to marry me, and that he thought I could not do better. He could give me nothing, and now I might be provided for beyond all expectation. You, Charlotte, will think I felt and expressed horror, and confessed that I already passionately loved. No, nothing like it. 'Tis true, for a moment I felt scorn and dislike of my offered husband, and a recollection of him I had loved; but the impression Parkhurst had made, his long absence and seeming neglect had begun to weaken: I yawned more than I sighed, and

even while Colonel Neterville spoke, began to conceive the pleasure that liberty and wealth might afford me.

"I acceded to the proposal, and thenceforward received Mr. Rodney as my accepted lover. I saw him every day, and every day felt less pleasure in my prospects, though I received numberless gifts of trinkets and dresses, which I had often wished for when they were beyond my reach. One thing which wearied and provoked me was, that Mr. Rodney dwelt on his own generosity more than I did; and often appraised the value of his presents with so much accuracy and admiration, that a suspicion crossed my mind that he might not always be willing to give what seemed even now of so much consequence in his eyes.

"My father and Mr. Rodney both told me I was the most lucky girl in Ireland; and every day I felt less convinced of the truth of their assertion. The day drew near that was to change my name and condition. My father had

a small villa at that time near Dunleary, where we passed most part of the summer. One day, as he and Mr. Rodney were to dine with a friend at some distance, I amused myself with a solitary ramble on the sea-coast, when I observed a boat near the shore, and the crew who had manned it, sitting dispersed on the beach. As I was in a lonely spot, some distance from home, when I first discovered them, a slight feeling of timidity made me hasten to retrace my steps. My disturbance was now much increased by observing that one of the sailors followed in the same direction. I did not again look back, but grew seriously alarmed at hearing his footsteps every moment more distinctly gaining on me: at length he called me by my name, and I found that my pursuer was Parkhurst! 'It was time I should return, Jane,' said he; 'or perhaps the time is already past. I know all about you, except what I *will* know this instant—Will you go with me? or are you determined to marry

Rodney?' Had Parkhurst preserved his former flattering and caressing manner to me, I should perhaps have hesitated at failing in my duty to Colonel Netterville and my promises to Rodney; but, on being so suddenly and so bluntly summoned to decide on the future, and throw myself on the protection of one who, after all, was a stranger, was imposing, and I acceded with much trepidation, and a trembling consciousness of my intended infidelity, to his proposal of an elopement. It was agreed on between us that the next night but one I should have all that I intended to carry with me packed up, to await his messenger, who was to arrive about the time Colonel Netterville retired to repose after dinner.

CHAPTER X.

" I was too young, and too little accustomed to reflect on my situation, to consider what was to be my destiny on leaving home. Parkhurst was young and agreeable—Rodney the reverse; the one was my choice, the other my father's; and I felt a sort of subjection to Parkhurst, which I could not then account for. I returned home, terrified lest any unseen witness of our interview should have betrayed it. What a day of suffering was the next! Every time the door opened, every time Colonel Netterville looked at me, I felt as if all was discovered; yet every hour seemed to pass too quickly that was to force forward that of de-

cision. At the appointed time, a gipsy at the door began to sing a line of a ballad which was the preconcerted signal; my father already slept, and I descended, with wonderful presence of mind and celerity. Parkhurst collected my packages, and even insisted on my adding to them the gifts of Mr. Rodney, which I had designed he should resume when I was gone.

"We reached the boat, and embarked. My first emotion was only the fear of pursuit; the calm sea, the bright summer evening, gave me only a pleasant anticipation of my voyage. When the rowers ceased, and we lay by the vessel which was to be my home for many weeks, its appearance struck me with some dismay, which was very much increased when I had reached its miserable deck, crowded with coils of rope, packages, and barrels. The loud swearing of the dirty crew, the air of discomfort and confusion, filled me with affright and amazement. Remember, Char-

lotte, I am not like you; if you had been there with Carwell, you would have been contented: but though I then thought I loved Parkhurst most passionately, it was not enough to make his presence atone for every thing. He was immediately joined by an ill-looking man, whom he introduced as the Captain. This person laughed at my visible embarrassment, and told me I must get used to the sea. At length they assisted me to descend into the cabin, where a dingy horn-lantern swung round, without giving more light than just showed us how to avoid striking against the furniture of this most dismal cell. A small cabin on one side of it was my allotted lodging. The Captain and his mate, who supped with us, afterwards ascended to weigh anchor, and Parkhurst and I were left to discuss our future prospects.

"I now learned, for the first time, that our destination was Charlestown—that Parkhurst intended to proceed from thence to a settle-

ment on Cumberland River, where he had engaged himself as clerk in a sugar factory. His reason for leaving Dublin, he told me, was debts, thoughtlessly incurred, which he now found it impossible to discharge.

"I had hoped to have received countenance and forgiveness from Colonel Netterville, when some time should have elapsed after our marriage. At the same time, as I greatly feared him, I did not feel much grieved when I learned that I had quitted Ireland probably for ever. While Parkhurst and I were engaged in conversation, the anchor was weighed; the horrible noise attending which, and the changed motion of the ship, before a freshening breeze, soon rendered me insensible to every thing but my present situation; and many days elapsed ere I was well enough to know or care what passed around me.

"After a tedious passage we reached Charlestown, and in the course of the voyage I discovered that Parkhurst had no inten-

tion of marrying me; but it had now ceased to be an object with me. I was still attached to him; but I had begun to fear him, and I loved him less. However, I depended on him entirely, and my other shipmates were so odious, that he appeared a miracle of tenderness and refinement when compared with them. On our arrival in Charlestown, he left me on board while he went to procure a lodging. I was delivered from my prison on board the same evening, and greatly delighted in the change.

"The next day Parkhurst informed me that, to prevent our landing being ever known to Colonel Netterville, he had determined to pass by the name of Wilson, and that I was to be called his sister. A merchant, with whom he had had dealings, paid us a visit, and invited us to his house. He told us that the yellow fever was raging in Charlestown, and that the time we were to spend there would, he feared, make us witness many melancholy events. He had not visited us many times before he ap-

peared to show me some attention and partiality, which soon grew very evident to all who beheld us; and, to my great surprise, Parkhurst either did not see, or would not seem to be aware of it. Nay, he seemed to seek all opportunities of increasing our intimacy with Mr. Fanshawe, whose attention, though it pleased my vanity, I saw with some alarm, lest it should offend Parkhurst.

"The ravages of the fever in Charlestown daily increased; the danger of remaining there grew more and more apparent. Fanshawe observed to us, that he had a villa at some distance, to which he should go, and pressed us to join him in this retreat; to which Parkhurst agreed, and we all repaired thither. No one could be more kind than our host, more contented than Parkhurst; and, could I have banished from my mind some alarm respecting the duration of the good understanding subsisting among us, this part of my life would have

passed most happily. We no longer were disturbed by tales of the woes arising from the pestilential fever.

" Broadstone, Mr. Fanshawe's villa, was a detached house and farm, some way from the road, and surrounded by ground yet uncleared, irregularly wooded, and, by contrast, adding to the gay appearance of his neat house and its offices. At the end of a long walk, under trellis-work, loaded with vines, was a summer-house, built of logs on three sides, and the fourth open to the wood, and turned towards the west, where we frequently sat, and beheld the brilliant, but sudden sunsets of that climate.

" One evening, after a most overpowering day, we were enjoying its decline in the summer-house, when Parkhurst, seizing a gun which Mr. Fanshawe generally kept by him in that lonely spot, went in pursuit of a squirrel which had been climbing the trees near us. I was enjoying listlessly the stillness which

belongs to, and harmonizes so well with, the scorching days of southern climates. I observed to Fanshawe, that no weather could be too hot where you are not obliged to use exertion; that I never desired cooler weather while I might sit there. 'No!' he replied; 'nor do *I* desire any change in the weather or this place while you are sitting there, and contented to remain.' 'Though you, a native,' I replied, 'are sufficiently inured to this weather to bear the fatigue of making compliments in it, excuse me, a foreigner, for not having suitable replies ready. If a breeze were to spring up, I would say something civil and friendly in return.' 'How high must the breeze blow before it makes you say something *more* more than civil and friendly?' 'Oh! a perfect storm! But it is an ill wind that blows nobody good: I should then grow eloquent.' 'I wish *I* could,' replied Fanshawe.

"A confused foreboding kept me silent. There was a pause. 'What can be the reason, Miss

Wilson,' resumed my companion, 'that women, who are naturally generous and sincere, are usually less disposed to show those qualities where their exertion would do them most credit? Is it that the consciousness of power hardens all human hearts? You must, for a long time past, have seen the nature of my feelings towards you,—you must have long expected they would be expressed; but now that the moment is come when I may fairly plead for myself, I see in you an unaccountable wish to postpone hearing, or to evade answering me.—Why is this? If my suit fails, the sooner you are rid of my importunity the better; if otherwise, why should you cheat my future life of a portion of the happiness your approval would bestow? I have waited till you were sufficiently acquainted with me and my situation to know how far you might be disposed to remain here for ever.'

"Though I knew I must reply by a denial, and though I loved Parkhurst, I did not hear

Fanshawe with unmixed feelings. The characters of both my lovers passed in rapid contrast through my mind, — the honesty and direct conduct of Fanshawe, the unworthy and degraded mind of Parkhurst; and I felt, with some bitterness, that I had rendered myself unfit to be the wife of an upright and worthy man—that I was then, and ever must be, a living falsehood: and if Fanshawe knew me as I really was, he would revolt at the idea of making me his wife. I thought, too, how happy I might have been in the station now offered me, had I known Fanshawe before it was my evil destiny to have associated myself with his rival. I was not, however, obliged to make any reply; for while Fanshawe was yet speaking, Parkhurst returned, holding the dead squirrel, which had been the object of his pursuit, in his hand. The conversation now took another turn, and Fanshawe did not seek an opportunity of conversing apart with me that evening.

"It was the custom of Fanshawe to ride into Charlestown four times in the week, to attend to his office, and I thought I would seize one of those occasions to confide to Parkhurst what had taken place. Parkhurst heard, without any appearance of irritation or surprise, all I had to communicate. After I had concluded, and while Parkhurst seemed wrapped in thought, I said, 'You see, the sooner we can withdraw from Charlestown the better; our position here will be awkward; and jealousy will, perhaps, make Fanshawe quick-sighted enough to surmise our real connection.'

"'Let me alone,' replied Parkhurst, 'I am considering what use can be made of Fanshawe's partiality. After all, why should you not marry him?'

"'Marry him! Can you really be serious? This is your affection, then, for me, and your gratitude to him!'

"'One would think, Jane, that you were

still at a boarding-school, with your head full of constant lovers, and your pocket full of gingerbread nuts. Why, if you did marry him, you need not live "very happy ever after," as they do in fairy tales. You might leave him, you know, when we had made the most of the connexion; not that I am sure yet that this is, or even may be, the wisest mode of proceeding with our affectionate friend here: though I have been considering the matter these three weeks, and am determined somehow to make him useful.'

"'No, Parkhurst,' I exclaimed, 'I will not be the means of deceiving an honest man, who loves me better than I deserve. I am a worthless girl, and your property, I know; but I will not injure Fanshawe.'

"'Bless me! you are a first-rate tragedian; but as I am not a cruel giant, you may please yourself.'

"At this moment we were informed that one of the female slaves was seized with the fever.

The doctor who usually visited the slaves on Mr. Fanshawe's farm had not made his appearance there for two days. It was feared he also was ill. There was no one among them that could read the labels on the bottles of the medicine chest, or measure the requisite quantities. Parkhurst and I had heard the disease and its mode of treatment too often discussed since our arrival in Charlestown, not to know how to act. We had recourse therefore to Mr. Fanshawe's medicine chest; and I went to the bed of the sufferer, where I saw for the first time the rapid and deadly progress of this fatal disease. In the afternoon another slave sickened: Fanshawe, on his return, heard with great uneasiness the progress of the epidemic. In a few days all the slaves who belonged to the house were ill. We were forced to wait upon ourselves and them, several of whom died.

"These dismal circumstances did not prevent an explanation taking place between Fanshawe and me; but I positively declined mar-

rying, alleging that I wished not to separate myself from my brother, whose housekeeper I wished to be. Fanshawe saw with pain that I was in earnest, and submitted without any diminution of friendly regard and feeling. His honest and reasonable mind deserved all the kindness I could offer; and the greatest proof from me of good-will, was the not connecting my destiny with his.

"One day on his return from Charlestown, Fanshawe complained of head-ache, and seemed peculiarly weary. He offered me some fruit; and, in taking it, I felt his hand was burning hot. On my questioning him, he owned he was ill. Two hours more put it beyond doubt, by developing the fever in its most menacing form. Parkhurst and I attended him with the most sedulous attention, administered his medicines, and watched by him. On the second day, he sank into a stupor; and, except at rare intervals, and for a short time, seemed insensible of all things about him. We now

divided the labours of the house: the more active part devolved on Parkhurst, and the invalid became my sole care.

"On descending from his chamber to prepare some drink for him, I could not refrain from expressing my fear, that he would not survive this disease. Parkhurst did not share my distress. 'If Fanshawe dies,' said he, 'we at least may profit by the event. He is a single man; and, by his own account, had no relation but a brother at sea. I shall certainly take possession of every thing that can be secured without apparently despoiling the house. I know he has a large sum here, and I know also where to find it; and owing to this lucky fever, no one can be expected to account for any money that is missing.—We have no reason to regret it even if he *does* die!'

"Shocked and irritated by Parkhurst's baseness, I remonstrated loudly and angrily, and withdrew overwhelmed with affliction. The succeeding day did not lessen my disquiet.

Fanshawe's state was equally alarming; I began to think his death certain, and to see with horror that Parkhurst did not seem to wish it averted, but rather to repine at his prolonged struggle with disease.

"Fanshawe was restless; sometimes in stupor, and sometimes delirious. He required constant attention. Towards evening I was spent with fatigue, and Parkhurst entering the room begged me, with more than usual kindness, to retire and rest. 'It may be many hours, perhaps a day or two, before this ends,' added he; 'preserve your strength—go to bed, and I will call you up about two in the morning. It will be less melancholy for you to watch at day-break, and I will then rest.' To this proposition I agreed, and lay down on my bed: I slept heavily, no doubt, for some hours, and my first consciousness was a dream of confused anxiety. I thought I was again on board ship — that Fanshawe, as well as Parkhurst, were my companions

— that the heaving surges were bearing us towards a lee-shore; that we made a thousand fruitless efforts to lighten the vessel, by throwing every thing over-board; and at length, as every moment added to our danger, I saw Parkhurst endeavour to throw Fanshawe into the foaming sea! I struggled—flew to his assistance, and awoke.

"In a few minutes my vague terror subsided; I recollected where I was, and thought, from the time I must have slept, that either Parkhurst had delayed to call me, or that, when he did, I had continued to sleep from heaviness. Perhaps even now he might want me, but could not leave Fanshawe long enough to seek my chamber. This idea alarmed me; I seized a loose wrapper, and, putting it on, proceeded to the apartment of the sufferer. The night was cloudy, and the smothered beams of the moon afforded the only light to guide me through a long corridor which led from my chamber to the staircase. The house seemed

still, and, condemning my past fears, I felt a temptation to return to bed, and remain till Parkhurst should call me. Again, I considered that he who did not take the fervent interest I did in the recovery of Fanshawe, might perhaps be now sleeping, while his charge was, in partial consciousness, invoking my assistance: this painful idea hurried me on.

"To avoid disturbing Fanshawe, I trod lightly through the silent and gloomy passage, and entered his apartment unperceived by Parkhurst, who stood with his back to me, his face turned to the bed with the candle in his hand, as he intently contemplated the unconscious Fanshawe. I know not why I did not advance. An instant after, Parkhurst took two silk handkerchiefs out of a drawer, and plunged them in a basin of water, then wrung them dry, and, folding them in four, suddenly applied them to the face of Fanshawe.

"I then perceived his diabolical design: a few days before, when discoursing on the hor-

rors of the prevailing disease, Fanshawe had related an anecdote he had heard in Charlestown, of a servant who had thus deprived his master of life! A dismal shriek burst from my lips, I darted forward to the bed, and, seizing the handkerchief to withdraw it, was, in turn, seized by Parkhurst, who forcibly held my wrists. 'Fool,' he exclaimed, 'I spare him the pains of dying by nature's struggle—be quiet, woman!'

"'O Parkhurst,' I exclaimed, 'I have left every thing—I am your willing partner in all other crimes;—O Parkhurst! this once grant my prayer—Spare him!' The violence of my struggle made me fall on the ground; Parkhurst, to my amazement, let me go, and hastily withdrew the handkerchief from the face of his victim.

"I was preparing to thank him passionately for yielding to my entreaty, when I heard steps, and two persons entered the room. Parkhurst, more collected than I, had already been

aware of their approach, to which circumstance his mercy was owing. One was a sea-faring man, of middle age; the other, younger. The elder advanced hastily. 'Is my brother still living?' he asked. I could not perceive whether he knew only of the illness of Fanshawe, or might not advert to the cruel attempt of Parkhurst—it was even possible he might have been its witness. I now trembled for Parkhurst; but never could I have supposed any human being master of so much self-possession: he showed no emotion, but replied he hoped so, and held the candle over the bed, that the stranger might have an opportunity of satisfying his anxiety.

"No flickering of the light betrayed a tremulous arm, though we were not at the moment certain that Fanshawe lived; but it was so. The stranger was his brother, who had heard, when he landed at Charlestown, the report of his brother's illness, and hastened to see that he was attended: what else he might have

heard, I never learned; but a coldness and restraint in his manner towards us, did not escape the observation of both, though no explanation took place. The surgeon, who accompanied Captain Fanshawe from his ship, constantly supplied his place if he quitted his brother for a short time. They evidently scrutinized every word and look of Parkhurst, and, under the pretext of our friend's weak condition, we were not allowed to offer our adieux or thanks. We soon after pursued our journey to Kentuckey.

CHAPTER XI.

"It was not alone the hardships and forlornness of our wild journey," continued the unfortunate woman, "that sunk and saddened my heart; I saw my companion in a new point of view. Every time my eyes rested on his face, I thought I saw in his eye the cold dark glare; on his lip, the pale, compressed determination which had frozen me with terror on the night he had so nearly taken the life of Fanshawe. Every night I repeated to myself that the protector I had chosen was a villain and a murderer, and for him I had left my home, my father, my country—had sacrificed my good name, and my peace of

mind;—he was my only link to society! It was too late to seek another destiny!

"Sometimes these reflections reduced me to despair; at others, I endeavoured to account for his design on Fanshawe's life, by motives less degrading than those which had appeared to influence him. I hoped that jealousy had raised an unjust enmity towards our kind friend, and not that the sordid wish to enrich himself had prompted that diabolical action. Sometimes I fancied that a new situation would enable him to appear in a new character; that he who had experienced the disquiet and degradation of vice, would gladly try to obtain a different position in the world. Meantime, we pursued our most weary course: I dared not express my thoughts on all that had passed at Charlestown; yet Parkhurst, though he did not revert to the subject, did not seem to fear discussion, or shrink from any thing which might lead to it.

"One day, owing to accidental circumstan-

ces arising from the difficulties attending our passing through a country in many places wholly uncultivated and even uninhabited, we discovered that our day's travel would fall so far short of our previous calculation, that we could not reach a log-house and small settlement at which we had proposed it should end. We had to pass a woody and lonely tract of country, and the moon would not afford sufficient light for us to prolong our journey during a part of the night. When the evening began to decline, we reached a spot where we observed a rock which contained one of those limestone caves not uncommon in this part of America. We soon determined to take shelter there for the night. We were provided with those rude comforts which our present situation required: I collected dry sticks and leaves, which by the help of Parkhurst's flint and tinder-box, soon presented us with a good fire. We had some provisions, and, having fastened the horses near the mouth of the cave where they

might graze, we contentedly prepared to pass the night. The evening was dull and lowering; a boding and fitful wind rushed at times through the trees, and sounded like the discordant scream the spirits of the departed sometimes are supposed to utter, when attempting to communicate tidings of fearful importance, then sinking to struggling moans or deep silence, as in mockery of human lamentation.

"Ever since the event which had proved to me the thorough depravity of Parkhurst, I had regarded him and all he said with a kind of curiosity mingled with dread; and the evenings, as they drew us together, had now grown peculiarly unwelcome. That vague dread of evil which the weak-minded are so apt to feel in loneliness, was still more my portion in his company on this occasion. He talked of Fanshawe, and wondered whether he still survived; I endeavoured to make him feel how fortunate he had been in escaping the load of guilt into which the event would have overwhelmed him; he

heard me with patience, but without any of the feeling I had hoped to excite. By a natural transition, I spoke of the circumstances attending the death of Evans, and his unjust sentence. He gave complete attention to the tale, and when it was concluded, said, 'You have told me something I did not know, Jane; and I will do as much by you. That girl died by *my* hand—Evans lost his life through me; therefore the less you talk of this matter the better. I *am* grieved, and though it may be the worst action of my life in its results, I could not foresee them.—Who could have expected what, it appears, did actually occur? why should Evans choose that cursed hour to return to his house? why should he prove so devoid of reflection and prudence as not to give an alarm at once? why should the wretched girl invite me in by her levity, and irritate my temper afterwards? why should the idiot I trusted pine to death because his oath held him from telling the truth when it might

have been of use, and yet confess at last, in despite of his oath?—Fate, Jane, fate! there is no avoiding one's fate, it leads us on, whether we will or not.'

"Parkhurst might have spoken for hours, I gazed palsied with horror at my companion—the *murderer!*—the word died unuttered on my lips. He could not discern my feelings. I was silent, and my countenance was hardly seen in that dark cave, to which one small lamp lent a dim and fitful gleam, sometimes obscured by the smoke of our fire when borne towards the inside of the cavern by the inconstant gust.

"After a pause, he resumed the discourse.—'Of what use is it for you to consider the past, with its right and wrong?—The manner in which we became acquainted, the manner in which the acquaintance was carried on, must have taught you to form very moderate speculations as to the worth of my character, or the splendour of my condition.—And you, Jane, if you were *ever* to think that prudence or virtue were to be

objects of consideration, should have made the discovery at Colonel Neterville's:—I am what temptations have made me. The only promise I ever made you, was fulfilled, at the risk of my life. I gave you the opportunity of choosing with whom yours should be spent; be content with having obtained a privilege not always enjoyed by women in situations very superior to yours.—You have had your fancy, and, if you love me, you ought to be content. If you do *not* love me, why you are not the first child that ran after a butterfly and fell into a ditch. There are worse places in the world than a cave or a log-house; and believe me, reflection is only a respectable means of growing discontented;—let's avoid it.' 'True,' I rejoined, 'if yours were only common faults, common crimes; but oh, Parkhurst!—Murder! murder!'

"At this moment I raised my eyes, and thought they met those of a most fearful human countenance. I could not believe their evidence,

and, looking again, saw that Parkhurst's face was marked by inquietude. Neither spoke; the wind again drove the smoke of our fire into the cave, and rendered all objects indistinct. Had we a witness to our discourse? Its nature rendered that question of fearful importance. The place we were in was most unlikely to be visited by *one* individual, and if many were in its neighbourhood, how would they act, on learning the character of him whom the cave now sheltered? How much of our situation had our conversation taught them? and how far might malice, or justice, induce them to seek the punishment of one who deserved it too well?

"Again the smoke subsided, and no object met our eyes but those we viewed at first,—namely, rough blocks of limestone, on one of which our meal was spread, while on another stood our lamp, which, though it did not diffuse a bright light, afforded sufficient to see all that surrounded us. Our bed was spread on an open

space in the cave, that we might be prepared for defence should any wild beast or human enemy enter our retreat. Parkhurst, in a distinct but determined voice, told me that we would sleep alternately, lest some unseen foe might chance to fall upon us. Ere I had prepared for rest, a whistle outside the cave caused Parkhurst to seize his pistol, though a previous notice foreboded an amicable entrance. But the countenance of the new comer well justified distrust, and I beheld for the second time the serpent-eye and smiling scowl of Balthasar Levi.

"The alarm I had experienced at his first apparition was little appeased by later observation; and the thought that we might unwittingly have put into his possession secrets the most dangerous to our safety, tormented us unceasingly. He stated himself to be a lonely traveller, pursuing the very course which was to be ours, and on a speculation almost similar. He proposed to join us, and after some slight objec-

tions made by Parkhurst, we found it impossible to refuse.

" Time reconciled us to the intruder: Levi was an intelligent companion, an efficient assistant; he was hardy and observant; had travelled all over Kentucky, and many other parts of America; and, in many small embarrassments arising from the nature of our journey, we were constrained to admit that we should have been very helpless without him. These advantages ceased when we reached our destination; the knowledge he had acquired of our situation formed a bond we could not shake off; perhaps his pursuits and schemes were but too congenial to the partner of my flight, to allow him to be very earnest in trying to avoid Levi. Be this as it may, the commercial speculations which had been the ostensible motive for coming to Nashville soon failed, from the well-founded suspicion which Parkhurst and Levi excited by their unfair dealing. At length it became necessary for us to leave the country; and, as

many months had elapsed since the fatal imprudence which induced me to leave home, Parkhurst believed that in England we might be safe—we returned here.

"Oh, Charlotte! why should I describe the life we led before we knew you—the long sorrow of guilt and remorse? I cannot, and I will not. It is too late for repentance; all is over in this wretched dream of life—Farewell!"

CHAPTER XII.

I RETURNED to lament with Carwell the woeful scene I had just witnessed. We deplored together the fate of our late companion; and afterwards, reverting to our own situation and prospects, endeavoured to prove by comparison how much more fortunate we were than all others, who had shared in the unhappy transactions for which we were suffering.

"Oh! Carwell," I exclaimed, "how can you ever regret any thing on my account? Think of poor Jane Lyle! She dies at a distance from—perhaps unregretted by Parkhurst—I live with you, and you love me!"

Carwell rose suddenly from his chair, and walked about in silence. At length, stopping

and looking fixedly in my face, he said with effort, and in unconnected phrases, "Charlotte, it is better—it is, perhaps, needful to tell you the worst—the longer it is delayed—while I can yet assist you to bear our mutual misfortune—I ought to tell you—will you hear with courage?" He paused; and, gazing piteously, vainly tried to speak. No sound passed his severed lips; and I as vainly tried to inquire what hidden sorrow yet awaited me. The fearful pause was long—it was my last reprieve from endless sorrow!

Carwell made a sudden attempt to repress his feelings, and hastily told me that the wives of the convicts would not be permitted to accompany their husbands! and, gathering courage from having got over the disclosure, he added that no interest could obtain, no money could purchase an exemption from this rule. The first sentence was all I heard. He continued to speak, but it was to the ear, to the deafened ear of one who had heard the worst.

Long did we weep unrestrainedly. I was too completely crushed by this blow to attempt to conceal my feelings; and Carwell too much exhausted by the trial he had undergone in inflicting it, to offer the vain kindness of efforts to console me.

Hours passed ere I had composure to propose petitions and applications, which, he owned, had already been made—and fruitlessly! ere I could be convinced that we should really and soon be separated for ever. We, who had been all to each other—who, for years, had shared the same fate—were now to become but a vain recollection. The morning will rise, the evening will close without our meeting. We shall each wander in separate loneliness. I shall never more in this cold world breathe the same air with Carwell! In sickness I shall not attend him,—in death there will be no farewell! Nay, the "clods of the valley" may have long covered either, while the other still waits in sickly hope of receiving the beloved

writing of a hand which can never more express affection! Will not years of absence bring estrangement? Will Carwell remember her he never more must see? Will he remember the beloved of his youth, when a world almost lies between us?—A new land, new objects, new companions, will bring new impressions to him; but to me there is nothing left but life-long silence and eternal regrets. And can I wish him the same suffering? Sometimes I persuaded myself that I wished he might forget me and our past life, and that mine might close when I saw him for the last time.

On that dismal night, when the gates were closed, and the prisoners' friends dismissed, as usual, (it seemed to me as for the first time,) I shuddered on looking round that small room, where the next six hours of solitary sorrow were to be an anticipation of all my remaining years. The succeeding days brought bursts of sorrow, which were sometimes stilled by vague

hopes, on which Carwell endeavoured to fix my mind. Sometimes he suggested that a few women were suffered to remain in all ships, to work or wash for the crew — that he might, perhaps, obtain permission for me to fill that situation — that, at all events, a few years of laborious industry, in a country where labour was so dear, would furnish him with the means of paying for my passage in some merchant vessel — that perhaps my activity might earn enough to help him in this plan. He would then try to make me consider what were the employments best suited to me.

There were moments when these schemes appeared feasible; when they engaged my thoughts, and raised my spirits. There were other moments when they appeared visionary, and merely the kind artifices used by poor Carwell to inspire hope and exertion.

The stunning certainty of present misery was still wanting.

One morning I hastened to the prison with

better hopes and lighter spirits than I had known since our misfortune had been certain. I was rather later than usual, but I knew my increased cheerfulness would atone for the moments I had wasted. As I entered, I beheld two men leaning against the gate, who both looked earnestly at me. "Here's another," said one of them; "you will find we are not yet out of the scrape; another riot presently."—"Poor creatures, no wonder," said his companion; "it's a hard case."

I did not see how these observations regarded me, and passed on. As I approached that part of the prison where Carwell was confined, I was struck with an air of abandonment, a silence, an appearance of some past struggle. At length I beheld a woman, whom I knew by sight as the wife of one of the prisoners. She was now sitting at the door of a cell where her husband had been confined, rocking a young child in her arms, and weeping bitterly. I paused, intending to offer a word of consola-

tion to this poor creature, when she exclaimed: —"Ah, Mrs. Carwell, they are gone, they are all gone!" Her voice was choked by sobs, and while I was trying to comprehend what she wished to impart, one of the turnkeys, who was passing, presented a letter to me. I took it—it was from Carwell! My tears have not yet obliterated the beloved writing; it remains, and will remain, when all the anguish it caused has ceased—when my heavy heart is still. These were the contents:—

"It requires all the love I have ever borne you, my own Charlotte, to enable me to write at all, at this moment of inexpressible misery; but the time is too short to talk of my feelings, of the sufferings that such a parting inflicts. If to see you again be my first wish on earth, my second, and not less earnest prayer, is, that you will bear our fate as I wish, as I beseech you to do.

"Charlotte! death is the only real separa-

tion for those who love and are *resolved* to meet. Either I shall make money enough to bring you to me, or I shall return. Many men thus situated have done so — be assured we shall meet again, and sooner than may now seem probable. All I ask is, that you will, for my sake, make an effort to look beyond our present sorrow. Every day that you spend without weeping will be to me a proof of your affection, and of your confidence in mine ;—the only proof you can now give, and the most prized of all I could receive.

" Take courage ; we have years, even of youth, before us. Need I say that you will hear of me by every means that offers ? Yet be not alarmed, when a thousand common accidents may prevent my letters from reaching you for long intervals. Always be sure they are written, and full of the feelings which dictate this.

" I wish to say nothing to affect or soften you, but I cannot go without beseeching you

to pardon the accursed madness which has brought all this evil upon us. Never were vices punished like mine! never were virtues so ill-recompensed as yours,—and O that I alone were to pay the penalty of my faults! How ill I have kept my promise to your mother!—I do not deserve to have the hopes I try to inspire fulfilled. If we never meet again, Charlotte, believe I loved you as well as man can love, and that no punishment could have been so severe as that which has fallen upon me—to have lived to be separated from you, and the cause of the sad and anxious hours that must, I know, be passed before we meet again!

"Yet this is only the depression which is caused by the consciousness of my errors;—we shall meet, Charlotte, be sure we shall. You do forgive, you will remember me. I am content and strong in that hope. When you think of me, let it not be as of the weak, erring, and worldly being you have known me, but as of one who deserved the love of the most perfect

of earthly creatures. My chastisement and your example have not been in vain.

"I should now with transport look forward to the severest labour and the humblest lot, were we together. We are called—no time is allowed—I shall not see you. This hour so bitter to me is the last of your peace. Oh! what would I give to know that to-morrow you will grieve with moderation! Farewell! —that word must come—bear it, sweet Charlotte, for my sake.

"EDMUND CARWELL."

The order had arrived the preceding evening to forward the prisoners condemned to transportation to Portsmouth, whence they were to sail immediately for New Holland. As this was wholly unforeseen, and time had been expected to be allowed for the farewell of those unhappy friends from whom they were to part for years, or for ever, the sorrows, which in better-regulated minds would have

been solitary and submissive, assumed the expression of fury and despair among many of these misguided persons, and they turned in rage on those who were appointed to carry the order into execution.

A scene of riot ensued,—of ineffectual resistance, of fruitless lamentation,—fearful to those who were to oppose, and heart-rending even to those obliged to witness it. But force compelled obedience. Carwell had endeavoured to convince his fellow-exiles of the necessity of submitting. The struggle was now over. Some of those most active in promoting it were placed in confinement; some were sent forth, and some still lingered where their friends had been.

It was long ere I could entirely comprehend what is here related. I did not weep, a kind of drowsy sickness prevented my feeling. I wished to convince myself that all was real—to learn whether Carwell was actually gone, and I still in a spot where he would never

more be. I repaired to the cell where he had been; I called him repeatedly. I gazed on some flowers I had brought him the preceding day; he had put them in water, and they stood in undiminished freshness! The chairs on which we had sat the evening before, were in the same position; the pen with which he had bidden me farewell was in the ink.

Schemes of following him, of seeing him once more before the ship sailed, next occupied my mind. I asked counsel of those about me, but was soon convinced by their answers that long ere I could reach the coast he would be gone. Still, something might delay his departure, and if so, how great would be my sorrow should I have omitted any effort that might have enabled me to profit by such a circumstance. I besought a person about the prison to preserve any letter that came for me, and, taking a place on the outside of a coach, proceeded for Portsmouth. I was too much absorbed in my own anxiety to notice the com-

panions of my journey, till the chill air of midnight, and the fatigue of travelling in that exposed situation, recalled me to the feeling of bodily suffering, which soon grew very severe. Having passed the day without food, my limbs were soon numbed and insensible; I felt unable to keep my seat, and was sinking off it, when the person next me discovered my state and withheld me from falling. He had no sooner apprised our fellow-travellers of my illness, which they concluded was the consequence of the cold, than a gentleman inside humanely insisted upon changing seats with me; and, when I began to revive, I found the dawn of day was appearing, and that I had two companions, one a gentleman, much muffled up, whose face, by a green shade which was added to his travelling-cap, was entirely concealed from view. He kept a profound silence, and did not even raise his head. The lady, on the contrary, frequently addressed and questioned us both; but our fellow-tra-

veller appeared to sleep heavily, and my depression compelled me to answer in monosyllables.

After we had proceeded a little on our journey, that of the lady terminated; and hardly had she quitted us, when the silent and muffled traveller addressed me in the well-remembered accents of Parkhurst.

"Charlotte," said he, "why this fruitless journey? he will have gone before you reach the port, and you will only have encreased your distresses."

More he would have said, had not the sudden entrance of the traveller who had yielded his place to me interrupted and silenced him; but the stranger seemed to have caught the concluding accents, and regarded each of us with a penetrating glance. I thought I perceived that Parkhurst observed it with uneasiness; he soon after got out, and did not return. The stranger inquired if I was acquainted with the traveller who had just quitted us, and the

denial which I thought it safest to give, evidently encreased his suspicion, to my great mortification.

The sickening anxiety with which I looked forward to the close of my journey, presaged too truly how fruitless it would prove. All that remained of hope was over; the ship which bore my ill-starred husband had sailed, and was now but a speck in the distance, which a few moments would hide for ever from my view.

When those moments had passed, with a broken heart and tearful eyes I retraced my solitary journey.

END OF CHARLOTTE'S MS.

Towards the dusk one evening in autumn in the year 1813, a jeweller in Holborn was occupied in lighting his shop, when a female entered, and asked to see some trifling article. There was something in the low, soft, and tremulous tone of her voice which attracted his

attention; and, upon looking at her person, its extreme beauty was still more remarkable. Her features were regular and delicate; her skin, transparent and smooth, formed a striking contrast with the jet-black hair which curled about her brows, and divided round her fair and distinguished forehead. Her cheeks bore that purple and circumscribed flush that anxiety and agitation produce; her manner was hurried and confused, and her eyes were full of a singular expression.

In spite of this unusual appearance, there was nothing to excite disadvantageous suspicion: her dress, though carelessly arranged, was neat, and her whole exterior seemed that of a gentlewoman. She selected some trifle, and presented a note, which she requested might be changed, and Mr. Evans prepared to comply with her request, when a hasty examination of the note convinced him (though the execution was admirable) that it was forged.

Again he looked at her who presented it.

No tremour announced guilt; nor, when he mentioned that he had not wherewith to change five pounds, did she evince trepidation. It is true, her manner was not free from perturbation, but it was untinctured by alarm. Evans whispered his assistant, and gave him the note; he went out and returned in a few minutes, accompanied by another man, who stood at the door looking fixedly at the stranger. A moment's pause ensued, and then Evans exclaimed, "Young woman, how came this note into your hands?"

"I have had it some time," was her reply.

"Are you aware that it is forged?"—No answer. "You will be made to account for its being in your possession."

"I will speak on my trial," said she mildly; "do your duty."

Evans beckoned to the man at the door, and she was placed in the custody of a constable! Nothing could exceed the surprise of the by-standers at the whole of this trans-

action. The total absence of alarm—the imprudent readiness with which the culprit had admitted her guilt, without apparently the least wish to escape from its consequences, created a suspicion in those who had witnessed such singular conduct that she was either insane or intoxicated; but none who had observed her person and manner could long harbour the last idea, and the artful execution of the forgery seemed to forbid the former conjecture. All who had seen this early part of the proceedings against her, looked forward with curiosity and compassion to the time of her trial.

CHAPTER XIII.

And was there terror and despair in the dark cell of the offender? Did the prospect of punishments, temporal and eternal, the certainty of disgrace, the fear of death, the regrets of the past, the suspense of the present, overwhelm the wretch who had so daringly incurred such penalties? Was she too presumptuous to fear—too insensible to feel, the consequences of her evil actions? Or have the tumultuous terrors of those consequences annihilated all reflection? and does she, stunned, confused, and despairing, almost unconsciously await the vengeance of the law? Great would have been the surprise of those who might seek

her dungeon with the expectation of witnessing such feelings.

Alone in that miserable prison, without friends, almost without money, in cold and in darkness, sat one whose heart beat thick with joyful hope; to whom this world presented nothing but joyous anticipations; whose beauty (like the lamps in sepulchres) shone more brightly for the surrounding gloom; who would not have exchanged that miserable pallet and dark cell for the gayest and most gilded saloon, nor her own hopes and feelings for those of the most flattered and triumphant beauty, though surrounded by mirth, music, friends, and lovers. Will any wonder if her state of mind is possible in such a situation? It is easily accounted for. The prisoner was a woman who loved fervently and sincerely;—it was Charlotte Carwell, who had attained the unhoped-for blessing (so she thought) of being about to rejoin her husband.

Upon returning from the vain attempt to see

him ere his embarkation, she had at first sunk in hopeless dejection; her sorrows had all the aggravation which loneliness adds to woe; no friendly voice bade her to hope, or afforded other considerations to her mind than those which perpetually recurred of themselves. She suddenly felt what it is to stand alone in a world wherein human beings must ever thirst for human sympathy. When, after being the first object to one passionately beloved — after having too easily acquired the custom of sharing all ideas and feelings with another, the hard lesson of eternal silence and self-dependence must be learned — it is not the depression of sorrow, but of terror, which takes possession of the mind. Charlotte shed torrents of tears for her misfortune; and they redoubled at the reflection, that all around her were wholly indifferent to her feelings — that henceforth she must learn to live and die uncared for.

Two months had elapsed since the departure of Carwell, and her scanty stock of money was

so much diminished, that an effort on her part to obtain some means of subsistence became absolutely necessary. She remembered all his advice and exhortations to her on the subject of employment, and had a melancholy pleasure in complying with the request of one from whom it was probable she might never hear another. The applications she made to former employers were at first unsuccessful; the public disgrace of her husband had rendered them distrustful and unaccommodating to her; and when at length she did obtain some work, the indolence of sorrow often paralyzed her hands, and she sunk into long and melancholy musings, instead of diligently pursuing her occupations.

One day she recollected the box which Mrs. Lyle, when dying, had requested her to destroy; the many fearful interests which had agitated her since it had been in her custody, had prevented her having hitherto attended to that unhappy person's request. She at length

opened the box with the intention of fulfilling it, when the first object that struck her eyes was a bundle of bank-notes, the same she had been urged to destroy. Charlotte now took them out of the box for that purpose, and gazed mournfully on these memorials of crimes and misfortunes, thinking how much they had cost her. It suddenly occurred to her, that, had she participated in the offences of Parkhurst and Mrs. Lyle, she might have shared the exile of Carwell—that she might, by attempting to pass one of these notes, ensure immediate transportation to Botany Bay. Who would be injured by her putting such a project in execution? It was sure to be detected. Her good name had perished already. Disgrace, solitude, and abandonment, were evermore to be her portion in Europe. The appearance, the penalties of guilt, were her's already; the commission of the fact would alone deliver her from its punishment. She saw Carwell, a home, a vision of all she had prized on earth, and

wondered that she could have hesitated even for an instant.

At other moments, she trembled at the thought of multitudes who would believe her guilty of the basest crimes; and she started at the idea that she might be only remembered in the land of her birth, of her early happiness, as a felon! To be sure that the names of Carwell and his wife were to be only inscribed on the records of infamy, filled her eyes with tears.

Still the uncertain degree of injury which forgery, if successful, may inflict upon those who suffer by it, need not deter her; she would use no artifice to escape detection — detection with her was success. The attempt was therefore made — all had occurred as she had expected and wished; and she awaited the result of her trial with patient hope.

At length the trial came on; Charlotte and several other prisoners stood at the bar. Strange was the contrast between the mean, dark countenances, the vulgar and coarse forms of her fellow-culprits, when compared with her

mild and ingenuous expression, her graceful and distinguished figure. For an instant she shrank from the fixed and eager gaze bent on her. Awed and humbled, her eyes involuntarily sought for some familiar and encouraging glance. She vainly wished to hold some hand whose returning pressure would assure her of kindred feeling, protection, and sympathy; she recollected there was but one on earth who could share all her feelings; and her present humiliation and suffering were the only means of restoring him to her. With this reflection, she was again composed, and prepared to hear the charges against her.

When questioned if she was guilty, she readily replied in the affirmative; but when, reproved for that confession, she was advised to plead "not guilty," she obeyed. The first witness sworn was the jeweller. He described how the offence took place, with the greatest detail, and all circumstances connected with her apprehension. The shopman then confirmed his testimony; and added, that, from

her great self-possession, he was impressed with the idea of her being an old offender. He was the more induced to think so, as, had extreme distress urged her to the commission of the fact, the articles she had endeavoured to obtain would have been necessaries, and not luxuries.

The constable who had been summoned to apprehend her, now gave his evidence, much to the same purport. And here Charlotte thought all evidence against her must terminate; she rather feared her purpose in passing the forged note would be so obvious, that the sentence might defeat her stratagem.

But another name was called, and a stout, dark man, of whose person she had no recollection, ascended the witness-box, and after being sworn, was asked whether he knew the prisoner at the bar; he said "Yes;" and other questions elicited the following information:— That in the preceding year, he had been employed to trace the celebrated James Wilson,

who he found went also by the name of Parkhurst. In consequence of some intelligence received at Bow-street, he visited an obscure lodging, said to be occupied by a female named Carwell; and after an exact search, which convinced him that Parkhurst had been there, he was summoned by another Bow-street officer who had accompanied him, to search another house, where Wilson, it was supposed, might be concealed; that, during the survey of Carwell's lodging, the only person found there was the prisoner at the bar, who betrayed great perturbation and alarm, but pretended that Wilson was wholly unknown to her; that he had no doubt she belonged to Wilson's gang.

When this witness descended, another Bow-street officer deposed, that being also dispatched for the apprehension of Wilson, who had escaped, (when Carwell, Dunning, and the rest had been taken,) he had proceeded part of the way from Portsmouth in a coach, where he met the prisoner, who was also proceeding by

the same coach; that he interrupted a conversation between the prisoner and a man, who, from subsequent information, which he obtained too late to profit by, he could not doubt was Parkhurst! that on asking the prisoner if she was acquainted with this man, she had faintly, and with visible embarrassment, denied it.

The evidence for the prosecution closed. The Judge, in a mild and slow tone, asked if the prisoner had any thing to urge in her defence, and she replied in the negative. The facts repeated were true in substance, though the inference drawn from them was erroneous.

The Judge had reprehended the witnesses whenever they had drawn an unfavourable inference from any of the facts that had fallen under their observation; had stopped them when they brought forward any circumstance from hearsay, with that patience, discrimination, and impartiality, that is, perhaps, only experienced from English judges, and which

no Briton can witness without blessing the happy contrast between foreign judicial proceedings and our own. The lawyers had questioned with that triumphant arrogance, that petulant confidence, so well calculated to make a timid observer doubt the evidence of his senses.

At length the Judge recapitulated to the Jury the substance of the testimony against Charlotte Carwell, concluding with begging that she might have the benefit of any doubt that might arise in their minds. The Jury, after a short consultation, declared that the prisoner at the bar was guilty.

The Judge then inquired whether there was any plea the prisoner had to offer in her defence. Charlotte had heard the decision with little alarm, from the expectation of having the sentence commuted to transportation. From this serenity, however, she was roused, by hearing the Judge make some general reflections on the enormity of the crime of forgery, and

utter words of regret for the necessity which existed in every case to punish it with severity. This was followed by his condemning her to the penalty of *death!* He recommended her to make the best use of the short remainder of her existence, and added, that he could not flatter her with any hopes of mercy.

He might have spoken for hours; Charlotte could scarce believe she heard aright. There are some short spaces in every life, that would almost persuade those who experience them, that they have lived years in the space of a few moments; such an infinite variety of ideas and feelings are crowded into them, that they seem the foretaste of an existence independent of time. Such were to Charlotte the few moments that elapsed of the pause after the Judge had ceased to speak. She could hardly comprehend her situation: an hour before, she had looked forward to love and life, to the moment when she should relate to Carwell all she had done and suffered for his sake; when

he should applaud the courage and ingenuity that had enabled her to make such circumstances subservient to their re-union and happiness. And were all these hopes to end in shame and death? Had she seen him for the last time? Would he hear of her disgraceful end, without learning the high hopes which had led her to destruction? Surely, if her motives were known, she might expect compassion and pardon.

She looked round, almost expecting that some of the spectators had read her heart and would plead her cause. Some countenances expressed pity, but more regarded her with cold curiosity; and many were occupied with interests and conversations the most trifling, and the most foreign to the scene which was passing before them. Strange insensibility! while the destiny of a fellow-creature hangs in the balance, or when the word has gone forth that severs him from this earth, where he would still fondly linger in spite of sorrow; how can

those, who may as soon be overtaken by anguish and death, (though in some other shape,) —how can they dwell on the trifles which interest our health and happiness? To-morrow, when you are gay with pleasant companions, he is parting with the tearful friends he loved best on earth—to-morrow will close for you in gilded halls bright with lamps; it will bring him to "the dust of death," where "all his thoughts perish."

When the gaoler removed the prisoner, the scene just passed appeared so unreal, so impossible to Charlotte, that she needed not the support of courage. She could not conceive that she was condemned to die; she did not tremble, but she felt stunned and amazed. She found a Bible in the cell; and half an hour afterwards the Ordinary came to offer the last consolations of religion. He first addressed her with some animadversions on the heinousness of her crime, and exhorted her to repentance. She tried to convince him that she concurred

in his opinion, but that her fault was committed with the wish to be detected, and for the purpose of rejoining her husband.

But she saw that she obtained no credit. Mr. Sancroft besought her to renounce the vain hope of pardon, which is never extended to crimes like her's, and would only cheat her of moments which might be more profitably employed in prayer and penitence. "The time is come," said he, "when the interests of this life should be to you as nothing; the fashion of this world is passing away—reflect and repent. Consider those who survive you as dying men, who, after a few days of struggle, anxiety, and unsatisfactory attempts to prolong that struggle, must follow you. Where will then be the hearts they prized? the wealth they coveted? Gone! as all is gone from you. All that this world can give, lasts so short a time, that it is not worth repining about, though it may be taken away a few days sooner than you reckoned on possessing it.

Your only wish, you say, was to rejoin your banished husband; it was impossible, circumstanced as you both were, that you should ever gratify that wish. In leaving this earth, then, you have the less to regret. Your sacrifice of terrestrial affections is sooner made: bless the fate that saves you from protracted disappointment. Nay, perhaps had you obtained your object, you might not have been happier: change of place, lapse of time, may have already exhausted the sentiment on which you depended for felicity. Time certainly would alter its nature: what then might have ensued? reproach! bickerings! perhaps dislike!"

"Dislike!" exclaimed Charlotte; "Oh! no, Sir, we might have disagreed, but we could not have disliked each other."

"Can you reckon on the duration of any human feeling?" resumed the clergyman: "There is but one hope, but one sentiment unchangeable, because He is 'faithful that hath

promised,' and with Him 'is no variableness nor shadow of turning.' We value it little in prosperity; we have then nearer, if not brighter, prospects. These dazzle our eyes, and, till they fade, we do not see 'the one thing needful;' which (however varied our interests may be when life first opens) will, when it closes, be our only refuge and consolation. If, (unfortunately for you,) you have not yet sought it, seek it now—the unwilling labourer was accepted at 'the eleventh hour.'

"When men seek permission to address their complaint or entreaty to an earthly prince, it is often denied, and, if obtained, is obtained with difficulty. His judgment may be perverted by those about him; his pity absorbed by others: he cannot read your heart; the very words in which you express yourself may displease. But He, the King of Kings, who has graciously encouraged us to call Him our Father, at all times, in all places, has promised to hear the faintest murmur of

sincere prayer, though uttered by the greatest sinner from the lowest cell. Let us use this privilege, the most glorious allowed to man, while it is yet ours; it will soon be taken from you."

Charlotte obeyed; but no sooner was she alone, than the thought of Carwell and the hope of pardon again filled her mind; she sought an advocate who might state her case and plead for a mitigation of her punishment: her intercourse with her fellow-creatures had been so limited that she knew not to whom she might address herself with the hope of obtaining attention. At last, she recollected that Dudley, who had once, when he thought her the vicious companion of the set she had lived among, interested himself in her reformation, might be induced to try the effect of an application for mercy; and she addressed to him the following letter, enclosing a minute detail of her previous life, and the circumstances which had placed her in her present peril.

"TO MR. DUDLEY.

"THE humane wish you once showed to save a creature, apparently erring and degraded, from what then seemed to you a voluntary course of vice, is the only inducement I have to found my present claim on your love of justice and compassion. If, after reading the statement I have enclosed, you think me worthy of your generous exertion, I entreat you to endeavour by application to those in power to procure a mitigation of my impending sentence. To have it changed to transportation for life is the passionate wish of my heart. Such a decree would give me happiness seldom known on earth; would restore me to my husband, and you could never see the name of the distant New Holland, without recollecting that it contained two happy and grateful hearts that *you* had made so; that two voices never uttered prayer or thanksgiving in which your name was not included. Even among the great and the gay there are hours of cheerless

solitude, and times of crosses and disappointments; and when these should occur to you, the happy home you had preserved for us, would brighten your loneliness; the hopes you had fulfilled for us would half console you for what was denied to your own wishes.

"To spend our lives together in a distant, though disgraceful exile, is all that is now desirable to Carwell and to me. The boon may seem small to those whose imaginations muse on brighter and more elevated destinies! May it be, therefore, the more readily granted! If your kindness fails, the merit of your intention will rest with you; and still Carwell will bless in mournful gratitude the friendly hand that tried to save his ill-fated Charlotte from a violent and early death; and I, amidst the fear of death, and the passionate regret of life and love, will bear to my untimely grave the recollection of what I owe you.

"But I will not waste the few hours that perhaps remain to me. I have said enough, if

I excite your pity — too much if I meet with disbelief.

"Your obedient servant,

"CHARLOTTE CARWELL."

As Mr. Dudley was a Member of Parliament, the address was easily ascertained. He was not at his town residence, but Charlotte's messenger found that he was certainly on that day at his country-house, and the letter was forwarded to him. In moments of painful suspense, when we have resolved on any measure which may, perhaps, assist us, it is singular how apt the mind is for a short time afterwards to feel secure of its success, and then to relapse into doubt and despondence. Charlotte felt for an hour as if Dudley's application had already attained its object; her spirits rose to cheerfulness, and fancy carried her beyond her weary voyage—its terrors and its hardships;—she saw her destined port, the countenance of Carwell, when he should first know of his

coming, and she heard the tones of his voice, when he should welcome her.

But the deep sound of the prison clock, announcing that another of her numbered hours had elapsed, drew on a different train of reflection. Would Dudley believe a tale of which many circumstances, she felt, were improbable? Believing it, would he assist her? She had seen him take interest in her fate, but might it not proceed from the hope of making her seek his assistance and protection? All the anecdotes she had ever heard or read of the selfishness of man, of his indifference to the fate of those unconnected with his own, arose in her mind; nay, she remembered how often the story of sorrows resembling those she now felt had been heard by her; not with disregard, perhaps, but with a vague compassion, which, with its cause, was forgotten in a few moments. A different scene now presented itself. The scaffold — its shame — its terrors, and the long absence which death seals.

The pains of incertitude and suspense are so intense, that the wise arrangement of such pains preceding the most horrible certainty, must be obvious to every reflecting mind. The harsh preparation enables us to bear any shock with more courage; we do not "strive or cry;" some take refuge in cold pride, and conceal their suffering and *seem* to bear; and some in humble piety accept their chastisement, casting their care on Him "who careth for us;" but all appear to endure well what they have long feared.

CHAPTER XIV.

DUDLEY received the letter with surprise and read it with interest: though his habits and mode of life had not been calculated to soften the heart and expand its sympathy, he felt all the disposition to serve the unhappy writer that humanity could inspire. There are many men, who, though too indolent to seek occasions where their benevolence may be useful, yet joyfully seize those occasions when circumstances force them into observation. They feel for the moment relieved from that habitual consciousness of deficiency in their active duties which all men feel, and which rich and unemployed men must feel more than

others, as the very leisure that leads them to reflect upon it, aggravates their crime. Dudley instantly resolved to ride first to London, to make the necessary application; and in the mean while addressed Charlotte in the following letter.

"Dudley Park, Tuesday.

"TO MRS. CARWELL.

"YOU could not have addressed yourself to one more anxious to serve you: I believe your statement implicitly; and think you have the most rational ground to hope that the peculiar and extenuating circumstances of your case will have due weight in an appeal for mercy If speed and zeal can avail, trust to mine. Be at peace: in twenty minutes I shall be on my road, and on Friday I hope to see you, and bring news of the happiest import. Again I beseech you, be at peace, and rely on your sincere friend

"CHAWORTH DUDLEY."

This letter was sent by express to the gaol, where Charlotte awaited her doom. It was evening, when the sad and the solitary feel the spirit sink even in far happier situations than a condemned cell. Charlotte felt the influence of the time and place, and was musing on the improbability of Dudley's assisting her, when one of the turnkeys brought her the letter and informed her it came by express. At first her anxiety deprived her of the power of discerning the words, and the throbbing of her pulses confused her head; but at length she read and understood the comfortable assurance, that she had an active, zealous, and apparently powerful friend. Her confidence was restored; but though so much relieved in mind, her feelings were too tumultuous to permit her to sleep. Broken and troubled slumbers, alternate dreams of escape, and condemnation, made her rise weary and unrefreshed, to the anxieties of the Thursday, which she calculated would be spent by Dudley in solicitation in

her favour. On Friday she should know the result; the Recorder's report would, it was expected, reach the gaol on the Friday noon: she could not doubt that she should receive the orders for her execution, though it was possible that Dudley's exertions might attain their end on the first day.

So passed the Thursday! and the morn of Friday found Charlotte endeavouring to calm the anguish of suspense.

CHAPTER XV.

AND what has become of Carwell? Sixteen thousand miles must sever him from all he knew and loved; from the familiar scenes which he must never more revisit. He dared not think of Charlotte, of the desolation of her heart, when she should enter his forsaken cell! He pressed his hands on his eyes, as if to shut out the scene which his mind pictured,—a punishment as severe as his life-long exile! No sooner had he and his miserable companions been taken to the hulk than they were clothed and ironed for their voyage; and, in spite of the pre-occupation of his mind, the sight of his fellow-convicts and of his fetters deeply

aggravated his sorrows and his shame. It was the intention of the Captain to proceed direct for Sidney.

Those who have known what it is to spend the weary months on the "wild and faithless sea," know how little there is to draw the mind from any disposition of its own. The day is lingering and dreary; tumultuous enough to prevent the wanderer from applying actively to any employment; at once combining the distraction of a crowd and the depression of solitude. But who can forget that aggregate of misery — a night at sea! the creaking of the bulk-heads, the jangling pump, the gurgling sound the ship makes in her course, the stamping of the men's feet when changing a sail, the damp raw night-breeze, the close cabin, and the terrors of a storm? And if all these are discomforts in a King's ship of English construction, what are they in a crowded transport, with wretched and desperate convicts as constant companions?

How often did Carwell, amidst the imprecations, blasphemy, and coarse violence of his shipmates, recollect the peace and happy seclusion of the home he had once possessed, and then hoped to possess for ever! Though constantly surrounded by human beings, how profound was his solitude! Weeks passed, but not without showing his Captain and overseers that he was wholly unlike those whose destiny it was his fault and fortune to share.

Some accounts were to be arranged, and accident having discovered that he was capable of being made useful, his assistance was claimed, and the more his demeanour was observed, the higher he rose in estimation. He officiated as clerk for the remainder of the voyage, without the grievous restraint of his original companions, and received many assurances from the captain and surgeon of the favourable report and recommendation he should receive from them on landing in the colony.

The hope of again winning esteem and re-

spect for his conduct — of leading Charlotte to a home which should never more be degraded and disturbed by his faults, cheered his heart. His spirits returned, and he revolved a thousand plans for the future. But this mental exaltation was only temporary: he began to wonder that one who had erred so deeply, dared look to the happiness he foresaw might still be his: he doubted the possibility of escaping, even in this world, the chastisement he felt he deserved. — So surely does self-reproach poison even our hopes! Then he considered how many evils might, even now, have overwhelmed his wife, — so young, so lovely, alone, and in poverty! and perhaps, even then, ignorant of his feelings and situation! How many chances were there against even his letters having reached her! In these alternations of cheerfulness and disquiet, time glided on, till the Abundance crossed the Line.

It must be a strong mind that, in care and doubt, is not sometimes crossed by superstitious

misgivings, and equally groundless encouragement. Many small incidents fostered this disposition in Carwell. Two men had been playing with dice one morning; the box and dice were lying on a coil of rope on the deck; Carwell, in passing, took up the box, and, mentally resolving to accept the casts he should make as omens of his future fortune, he repeatedly threw the lowest combination of numbers the dice can give. He paused, and a female voice close at his ear repeated, "Give it up, you will have no luck!" He turned quickly round, and beheld one of the female passengers; but her voice had, by fancy, seemed to him at the moment to resemble Charlotte's in tone; he felt saddened by the assertion, and eagerly pressed her to say why she had uttered it at that instant.

She had been struck by his anxious countenance, but her words, though uttered without design, haunted his mind for days.

Soon afterwards, he had one evening been

watching the efforts made by some of the crew to strike some dolphins, that, attracted by the ship, followed and surrounded it. The torches held over the ship's side, were reflected by the brilliant scales of the fish, which they struck at with an instrument, called by seamen a *grains*. It resembles the trident, represented as the attribute of Neptune. The fish, as they started from the impending blow, seemed to shake many-coloured spangles from their sides; and the dark figures of the men, their eager and animated attitudes as they stood between Carwell and the torch-light, formed a scene which would not have been without interest in the eye of a painter. Carwell gazed, till the fishers, weary with ill-success, retired, and then his dazzled eyes sought the relief of the dark cloudy sky and groaning surge, in its melancholy indistinctness. The moonlight struggled out between low-poised heavy clouds, and hung a thousand fantastic shadows over them and the waves. At last, one of the most pro-

minent clouds was whitening in the light, and to Carwell's fancy it presented a gigantic likeness of Charlotte. He gazed, and the resemblance every moment increased. The air of the head was her's; the profile distinctly showed the outline of Charlotte's face; she seemed to turn from him, to extend her arms as if seeking for help, or wringing them as in distress. Other clouds intervened, and the picture was lost; but Carwell again exclaimed, "It is an ill omen; she is perishing in want and sorrow, and I cannot help her!"

Sometimes in the night his dreams recalled the figure of Charlotte's mother sick and dying, and her faint voice reproachfully asking him why he had broken his promise to protect her daughter:—these afflicting words would awaken him in agonies of remorse and anxiety. But the reflection that alarmed him most frequently was, that he knew not where he might address his letters to his wife. Opportunities more than once occurred of sending letters back

by ships which the Abundance spoke with in the course of the voyage. At the time of their parting, Charlotte lodged close to the gaol; but it was unlikely she should remain there. He scarcely dared to hope that his letters would ever reach her, and he could only rely on her confidence in his promise, that he would not omit any opportunity of informing her how he was circumstanced.

When the morning light restored his spirits by that unaccountable influence which it possesses over the human frame, again he hoped, and planned, and tried to improve the good-will he had already excited in his superiors; but his tedious voyage was rendered more tedious by the currents drawing them so far west that the captain thought it advisable to recruit their diminished store of water, by putting into a South American port, a purpose he afterwards changed to visiting the Cape of Good Hope.

Every circumstance likely to lengthen the

passage appeared intolerable to Carwell; his heart sunk at the aspect of the blue and indistinct promontory, as it towered above the gigantic green billows in which the Abundance was tossing; and while his companions sighed at not being permitted to witness the luxury of the southern spring in those wild solitudes, he rather felt as if going on shore would add to the delay he already was lamenting. Their stay was, however, short, and he rejoiced to think it must be their last stop. Sometimes he flattered himself that the length of the voyage had rendered it possible that a letter from Charlotte might precede him at Sydney. Though improbable, it was possible, and hope was too infrequent a visitor not to be cherished. With a beating heart he heard the indications of land pointed out, and the reports of the ship's way quoted from the log.

One evening he was desired to look in a certain direction, and was informed that the

luminous object which distinctly appeared at intervals, was the revolving light which points out the entrance to Port Jackson; but the wind blew too strong a gale to enter it that night. The calm morning that succeeded, showed the high, white sandstone cliffs, in cheerful contrast with the lively verdure of the evergreens which deck the shore. Slender streams straying forth between rocks of many tints, occasionally sparkled in the sun; little bays, with white and sandy beaches, indented the coast on each side; and the tall spire of St. George's church rose before them. The gay appearance of this bright land of bondage struck Carwell the more, because the unfavourable weather had not permitted the Abundance to steer through Bass Straits, whence he might have contemplated the swelling hills of Australia, covered with unfading forests, which, if less lovely than the varied shades of English foliage, at least never offend the eye by the sere desolation of winter. The

" lone isles of Sydney Cove," with their rocks and underwood, were not without ornament. As he looked around, he again thought how happy he might be in that lovely land, were Charlotte once more his companion!

At the dawn of day the Abundance cast anchor, and her crew of prisoners were landed. The captain and superior officers did not fail to represent Carwell favourably, and to vouch for his being the most trustworthy of all those who had ever reached that colony under the disgraceful circumstances in which he appeared.

A person of the name of Ranmore, who carried on several farming speculations in the country, a distillery at Sydney, and a store at Paramatta, had occasion for a foreman, and obtained leave to employ Carwell, whose conduct, intelligence, and talent for business, so entirely satisfied him, that, after a few weeks, he proposed that if he would engage to remain a certain term of years in his employ, he would send for his wife. He made

many other advantageous concessions, but the first amply fulfilled his wishes. It was agreed that the English correspondent of Mr. Ranmore should seek Charlotte out, and make arrangements for her passage to Australia. The expenses were to be deducted from the salary which was assigned to Carwell as the compensation of his services. As the speculations at Sydney were regarded by Mr. Ranmore as the most important, he wished to remain for the purpose of superintending them, and his object in engaging Carwell, was to obtain a deputy to overlook those at Paramatta and in that neighbourhood.

Carwell had been in his new situation but a short time, when Mr. Ranmore informed him, that he had purchased a tract of land at Western Port, which he entertained hopes would prove a most valuable acquisition, and wished immediately to have a part of the timber cut down, and other measures taken for its improvement. To this end, he proposed

that Carwell, attended by a strong gang of convicts, should proceed thither without delay, and commence these operations. It was of little importance to Carwell, how and where he spent the ensuing year, (for that time must elapse before he could see Charlotte,) and change of place and employment is the medicine of restlessness and anxiety: he was pleased at the proposal, and with readiness undertook the wild journey. The rich aud lovely wilderness appeared before him, in plains covered with verdure and magnificent patches of tall trees, which the hand of man had never planted.

The day was spent in overlooking the workmen in the performance of the task he had assigned them. The first labour was to prepare huts for their lodging, from the trees they cut down; these, with a small one for Carwell's separate abode, were soon constructed: some of the men charred wood for their fuel, and some gathered leaves of the tea-tree, for which this tract is famous; others collected its bark, or the skins

of the swans and seals, and the gum of the Wattlebark. When the convicts repaired to their evening meal and the day's labour was over, Carwell frequently wandered with a gun in his hand, to shoot birds or animals whose appearance was new to him, and to take notes of the varieties of soil and its productions. This formed one of the most interesting and agreeable occupations enjoined by his employer; and often he remained absent from the huts till the approach of night rendered his way back very difficult to be found.

Sometimes he made excursions by water to Philip's Island, and caught the mullet, salmon, and other fish which abound among the rocks; and at night he remained for hours writing detailed accounts of the day's occupations and discoveries for Mr. Ranmore's information. Not unfrequently, when his wearied hand and eyes obliged him to desist, he sank into long musings on the future, and thought that when Charlotte should rejoin him,

they might here find a retreat from the unsuitable companions and bustle of Sydney; here they might forget the disgrace and danger of the past, without the humiliation, which, in society, they could not escape. Often, in his wanderings, he found himself choosing a spot whereon to build his future cottage, and smiled mournfully when he reflected how many circumstances might prevent his ever seeing it rise.

There was one young man whom Carwell often selected to accompany him on these expeditions. Hugh Davies was intelligent, active, and singularly fearless and strong; and not having his mind fixed on any one object of interest, he was more disposed to observe those around him. Often, when Carwell was seized with fits of abstraction, he was of use in recalling him to what ought to engage his attention.

"One advantage in this port, Hugh," said Carwell, one day as they were rowing home,

" is that we are not persecuted with the south-westerly wind as they are at Sidney."

" No, Mr. Carwell," Davies replied. " If we had one day's fair sail into the open sea, fifteen more would take us past Cape Lewin, into the Trade-wind, and I 'd give the Sidney-fellows leave to be after us if they could, and catch us when they can."

" Why, Sydney is but four days' sail from hence."

" True, Sir, but the south-wester blows right through Bass Straits. — I wish we were trying for it now, Sir," continued Davies, involuntarily pulling harder at the oar, and his face kindling with an expression which caught Carwell's eye, though he knew not what it indicated.

Days passed on in the same employments. On an excursion into the interior, with his usual companion, in which both were armed, and followed by dogs, one of these animals uttered a sudden howl, which attracted their

attention. Davies perceived a large snake twined round the dog's leg. He advanced, struck at, and after some blows killed it, though not without receiving a bite on his own ankle. Both then proceeded in the pursuit of some birds, and one which Carwell shot at, having fallen, he encouraged the dog to seize it. The animal rushed forward, but suddenly stopped and did not notice the call of Carwell, who coming up perceived the dog tremble and its limbs fail. In a moment it fell to the ground, as if seized with a fit; its body swelled, and the poor animal lay there panting with dim and dying eyes. Carwell turned round to consult Davies on this accident, when he beheld him falter and fall! Instantly, struck with the idea that the serpent's bite had caused this disorder, he flew to administer some remedies with which they had been provided in case of such an occurrence; but the stiffening limbs and dull eyes of Davies showed that all his cares were vain.

Even then, Carwell's eagerness to assist was not lost on the dying man. He struggled with an anxious wish to thank Carwell, and to make him some communication — to offer some warning, some advice or precaution; but he could only utter incoherent words, and even the anxiety to do so was in a few minutes lost in the stupor of approaching death. In half an hour from the time of the serpent's attack, Carwell stood alone by the body of Hugh Davies! He who that morning had gone forth in the cheerful elasticity of youth and health, now lay on the ground a swollen and blackened corse!

With trembling hands and dizzy head, Carwell continued to apply the medicines, long after the certainty of their being ineffectual had been forced on his mind; and frequently did he call for assistance, though in calmer moments he would have remembered that no human being was within reach of his voice. At length he marked the spot where this awful

event had taken place, and returned to the huts to secure the services of the other men in removing the remains of Davies. Though the horrid scene was ever before him, it was not for some days afterwards that he recollected it was the evident wish of Davies to have made him some communication, though of what nature he could not surmise. After some reflection he concluded that it would have proved a request, perhaps, in favour of a wife, parent, or friend, and therefore he questioned the other workmen as to what were Davies's connexions. They were all ignorant on the subject, and Carwell exclaimed, "Poor Hugh! what would I not give, had he lived long enough to say what he seemed so eager to tell me!"

At these words, two of the men, with whom he was talking, appeared confused and interchanged a look of consciousness; but so slight were these appearances that it was only on recollection that they struck Carwell as remarkable.

The following night he awoke with the startled feeling of one disturbed by sudden noise, and distinctly heard a variety of sounds at some distance. This was unusual here, where the cry of a bird, the rushing of the wind, or the waves lashing the rougher points of the shore, were the only interruptions to the long silence of the desert. He listened attentively, and was not without apprehension that some of the natives might have reached the little camp, and intended to plunder it. The only other kind of disturbance that he could anticipate was a quarrel among his party, which might arm some of the men against the rest. The sounds were repeatedly recurring at intervals, and he resolved to ascertain what they were.

Seizing upon a cutlass and a pistol, which he always kept by him ready loaded, he proceeded towards the huts which were at a little distance from his. The reflection that all his associates were wild and desperate men,

who would probably have little hesitation in committing any enormity from which they could derive the smallest gratification or advantage, was not calculated to allay the trepidation which it was natural to feel under such circumstances. At the nearest of the huts he found it impossible to rouse the inhabitants, so profound was their slumber. At the next, after some pause, one of the convicts opened the door, and said he had not heard any noise till roused by the repeated call of Carwell, who would then have retired but for the approach of four of the crew, who were dressed, and seemed much surprised at seeing him. These stated that they had heard the noises that disturbed him, and supposing it might have arisen from an incursion of the natives, they had gone to ascertain the fact, and thought it occasioned by some seals on the beach, for, though they had made a circuit of two or three miles, nothing remarkable or unusual had been visible. Carwell was satisfied, and nothing occurred the next day to remind him of his disturbed night.

Of the year, whose course had promised to pass so heavily, six weeks had gone by at Western Port; Carwell, to whom in prospect it had seemed interminable, felt glad to know that six weeks of it *could* pass. He retired to his hut more contentedly to dream of the future; but a repetition of the sounds which had before disturbed him again met his ear, and, while he paused to listen, the door opened, and a human being entered, who approached his bed, and held a pistol directed towards his head, while another followed, who uncovered a lantern. In spite of their threatening entrance, he was somewhat relieved by discovering that the intruders were two of his fellow convicts. He who held the pistol thus addressed him:—

"Mr. Carwell, we bear you no ill-will, but wish to save your life, and therefore warn you to collect any thing you may desire to keep, and follow us. As we are all agreed upon a certain plan, to which your opposition would be entirely ineffectual, and could produce no other

consequence than your own destruction, one of us must be present while your preparation is made. An hour is allowed you for the purpose. Be wise: offer no expostulation, and ask no question."

In spite of the assurance respecting his personal safety, Carwell doubted whether his life was to be spared. He could not doubt that their object was to escape. Many such attempts had been made by parties of the convicts, and they had never proved successful. To starve in some wild solitude, to perish by the treachery or open violence of the natives, had been the usual close of such expeditions, when they were not in the first instance overtaken by the colonial officers of justice.

These were considerations that he thought, if forcibly represented to his companions, might still induce them to relinquish their rash project. For himself it presented the most deplorable result. He had won the con-

fidence of his employer — had been appointed to an office of trust—his flight would appear the depth of ingratitude and incorrigible baseness — he had sent too for Charlotte — she would come, and find herself abandoned and most forlorn! He could not endure even to picture to himself what might then be her fate.

With apparent calmness and impartiality, he tried to gain permission to discuss the chances of the success or failure of their plans, with his associates; but soon found they were unanimous in fierce opposition to every attempt of the kind, and it was long before they would suffer him to speak of his own peculiar situation. He represented his own wish and interest in remaining in Australia. They might, nevertheless, obtain liberty and happiness by flight, which could only lead him to misery and ruin; and he earnestly besought them to leave him behind. As he could not prevent their flight, he would make no farther representation against their intention, and would

not even point out the direction of their course to the colonial officers, if they would make it a condition.

Long and eagerly he spoke, latterly without interruption, and he even discerned indications of sympathy in some of the countenances around. But when his words seemed to make the most impression, his hearers invariably turned their eyes as if asking the opinion of one of their number, who, of all around, seemed the least touched. This was Edwards, who had been the first to announce their will. His having done so, and their present deference to him, forced on Carwell the grievous conviction that on him his fate would depend. His hard eye and determined physiognomy showed at once there was nothing to hope. He ridiculed the supposition that Carwell could, or would, conceal the mode or period of their flight, and hastened his unwilling preparation.

Nothing could be greater than Carwell's

surprise when he found that a small vessel was waiting in the then solitary harbour of Western Port. Its arrival had been accidental. Some colonists had sent it to be loaded with wood, which was to have been brought from a cove a hundred miles nearer to Sydney; but the crew vainly contended with the force of the south-west wind already mentioned. The force of the gale they encountered made them think it a blessed chance that enabled them to gain a small wooded cove on Western Port. A gang of Carwell's party accidentally discovered them when cutting wood in the neighbourhood, and Edwards instantly conceived the plan, to which he persuaded the crew to agree; and so dexterous were they in concealing from Carwell their intercourse, and in causing Hugh Davies to persuade him to make all his excursions in other directions, that till they led him to the cove where it was anchored, he had never been aware that this means of escape was in their power!

In spite of the confusion and anguish of the moment, Carwell grieved to think of the duplicity of Hugh Davies, who had so fatally deceived him, though his constant and apparently attached companion. Many small circumstances now rushed upon his mind, and he felt certain that Davies had in his last moments repented, and even wished to confide the conspiracy to him, when he beheld the painful and ardent sympathy which Carwell showed at his untimely end. Imperfect as the intercourse must necessarily be between two persons whose education, habits, and feelings were entirely dissimilar, Davies had been his only voluntary associate, and he could not bear to think even that his good-will had been unreal.

They soon went on board, and Carwell gazed on the shore as the vessel receded from it, with agony as heartfelt and passionate at leaving Australia, as he had felt when he first learned he was destined to approach it. A la-

tent hope that they might be captured by some ship belonging to the colony — that the very vessel that bore Charlotte might be the means of reuniting them, were the first thoughts that offered any consolation; but the certainty that his companions would rather die than return to their bondage made such hopes only momentary comfort. When he was sufficiently calm to observe the circumstances of this wild and hazardous navigation, he was struck with the dexterity and thoughtfulness of those who had prepared for it; and, at the same time, was shocked to find the preparation so totally inadequate to the undertaking.

The leaders were sailors; and, like all the members of that noble profession, had, with fearless presence of mind, and the most minute attention to the benefit of the whole, made the most judicious arrangements which their situation permitted, and substituted the most ingenious contrivances for what it denied. But the *future*, that idol of the prudent, the passionless,

and the wise—the future had been forgotten. Carwell had now lived enough at sea to be certain he had begun a voyage of sixteen weeks in a vessel whose stores, though managed with ability, and frugally used, could not last half that time. It would have been of little avail—indeed, it might have been dangerous, to comment upon this with the rest of the crew; but he sought an opportunity of representing to Edwards in private the rashness of depending on such resources.

Edwards, however, had made the same reflections, but without coming to the same result. His clouded and anxious brow, his constant attempt to assume a cheerful alacrity in his manner, which, when narrowly observed, was evidently an effort—his calculations every moment resumed, and, after each, leaving a deeper shade of depression, were all proofs how much his fears out-numbered his hopes.

The south-west wind, after some days, died away, and Cape Lewin was yet far off. Light

variable winds sometimes filled their sails and hearts with hope, and sometimes fretted them with capricious opposition. But every delay filled the hearts of Carwell and Edwards with sinister forebodings. Their provisions diminished, and some of the crew had the improvident selfishness to steal from the scanty stock. The unanimous deference at first paid to Edwards as their leader, and as the individual most skilled in navigation, lessened as the first excitement of their adventure subsided. His authority could no longer repress the bickerings which were now constantly taking place; and the confidence which Edwards had once felt in his friends, and in himself, was rapidly giving way.

The touching union and kindly feelings which, in similar circumstances, is maintained amongst well-disciplined sailors, could not here be expected. Two-thirds of the men had never been at sea, except in their voyage to New South Wales. They could not feel for any

interests but their own, and, even in these, only for what was present and immediate. They appeared often to attribute the privations that arose from their situation to the wilful act of Edwards, who before the beginning of the adventure had often been accused by them of over-caution and timidity. Each now saw that, if *he* had been the leader, all chances would have been easily provided against; and, as their distresses encreased, each declared that *he* was always hostile to an undertaking so fraught with hazard, but that he had been over-persuaded by Edwards. These disputes and calculations were only suspended while they were engaged in conjectures relative to the time when they could hope to fall into the Trade-wind.

An adverse gale, which endured some days, encreased the irritation of their minds so much that it seemed to Carwell that the voyage could not proceed without some fatal quarrel, the consequence of which could not be foreseen.

But he had always regarded the close of their attempt with so much distrust, that it hardly added to his anxiety. Edwards showed great self-control, though his situation was most trying. The reproaches and accusations addressed to and pointed at him were almost too much for human nature, but he repressed all expression of his feelings.

The gale at length subsided, and with it some of the irritation which anxiety had so much aggravated. The small crew had been worn-out by the fatigue of the additional duty imposed by the bad weather. The evening set in dark and close; and a considerable ground-swell, the only evidence of the late storm, remained. Edwards, Carwell, and a boy, were all who watched; and the latter soon fell asleep, quite spent with the exertion of the preceding day. Carwell observed, that he too found it next to impossible to keep awake; but Edwards said that he had been so distracted by anxiety that he felt it impossible to rest, though he

should attempt it when relieved by two of the crew, in whom he had most dependance, and who were to succeed him and Carwell, for the first time since the voyage began. He now spoke despondingly of its termination, and without the fierce and dogged reserve which had distinguished all his previous intercourse with Carwell, who, touched by this change, endeavoured to speak encouragingly in return. But he saw that Edwards was subdued by witnessing the unjust manner in which his comrades appreciated his really courageous, patient, and judicious conduct as their leader. He frankly owned that he thought it impossible the men would submit to him as their captain much longer; and, as there was no other fit to replace him, he could look forward to nothing but death as the end of their dissensions.

Why are mankind so much more eager in lamentation over the non-fulfilment of their hopes, than thankful for escaping the fulfilment of their fears? And why are probable

evils so often reckoned certain, when almost every one must feel that his severest misfortunes have arisen from sources the most unforeseen? Carwell had soon occasion to make this reflection. When they were relieved from their watch, Edwards retired to the cabin; but Carwell, disliking its closeness in that warm, damp night, remained on deck, and, throwing his cloak over a coil of rope, soon sank into a profound sleep.

The wind was light, but adverse. The sky, hung with heavy clouds, was unusually dark. How this watch performed their trust cannot be known. Carwell was awakened, while the darkness yet continued, by a thundering shock, which threw him from his place, and made him involuntarily catch some object near him. A violent crash—a dismal cry from some of his companions — and the waters were his only support! The cry was echoed by other voices; and before he knew the nature and the danger of his situation, he was seized and res-

cued. He found himself on the deck of a strange vessel!

What he afterwards learned of the catastrophe which placed him there was this:—A ship (the Lady Jane) had so far proceeded, laden with certain stores, for Sydney: the wind (fair for them) was light, and with so much sea-room, and in a latitude not so frequently traversed as to hold out much probability of encountering another sail, perhaps the crew of the Lady Jane thought they were not much to blame for having, in so dark a night, run foul of the little bark which bore Carwell and his unhappy companions. At all events, the first intimation they received of its presence was a shock, which, from the greater size of the Lady Jane, did them comparatively little injury. Carwell and a boy, who had, like him, when tossing on the wave, caught at a rope which was suspended from some part of the Lady Jane's rigging, were suspended long enough to be seen and saved by her

crew, as the whelming waters closed over the wretched Edwards and his mutinous band! Where were the evils he had anticipated from causes never destined to afflict him? The brine has quenched the thirst of anxiety on his lips for ever. The Trade-wind will never impel his ship, but all winds are equally welcome to him now. His strained and blood-shot eyes will never behold a port, but he has found rest — the long and heavy repose of death! His thoughts, words, and deeds are registered, and will still avail or condemn him; but the circumstances of his life, his good and evil, are now nothing!

Yet when we are struggling to obtain, or are distracted at losing what we have so short a time to enjoy, which of us will remember this? Carwell did not. After the momentary joy, which all feel at escaping a fate so dismal, was over, his ardent wish to return to Sydney and clear himself from the imputation of having willingly escaped from Western Port, became

a torture from its intensity. He felt that if he were to lose the "golden opinions" he had won from his colonial task-masters, it would have the most fatal influence on his future—the *future!* How daring is the man who dares to rely on what the present does not give!

In the boy who was saved with him, he had a witness of his reluctant desertion, whose testimony might be valuable. He profited nothing by having witnessed the misdirected anxieties of his late companions; the possibilities he revolved were different indeed, but perhaps as extravagant. When we have no friend near whose cooler feelings permit him to see our hopes impartially, and check their unreasonableness, they grow wild as feverish dreams; and when bodily inaction, and the total absence of other cares, allow us to dwell on them without ceasing, he is a truly wise man who does not lay up for himself a plentiful store of disappointment—who does not "sow the wind and reap the whirlwind." Thus Carwell, after he had satisfied the curiosity of his new ship-

mates, having no human being with whom he could commune unreservedly, dwelt, night and day, on the more favourable chances that might befall him, till he considered them as certainties. He saw himself industrious, respected, and contented; having earned a competence, having, by his care, affection, and fidelity, repaid Charlotte for the sorrows she had undergone a thousand-fold,—both recollecting the past as a vision, of which only a confused and melancholy remembrance remained, to contrast with the happy present—both happy, till the latest period to which their existence might be protracted, and together awaiting its close.

His silence and abstraction were seldom broken, except when the ship's course, or the number of knots made in the last twenty-four hours were spoken of, and then he showed such keen interest, that his shipmates called him "The Log,"—a name to which he seemed to have a double claim.

A man must be highly gifted with patience,

who does not find a voyage of ordinary length very tedious; but when adverse winds render his trial of triple duration, it is a heavy one. The Lady Jane, however, at last beat through Bass Straits; and Carwell, with feelings of satisfaction only inferior to those which the sight of England would have bestowed, again beheld the spire of St. George's Church.

His first object was to seek Mr. Ranmore, and he found it less difficult than he supposed, to clear himself from a voluntary share in Edwards's escape. His interest in remaining at Sydney, the extravagance of attempting to reach England in so small a vessel, and with such insufficient stores as circumstances permitted them to provide, could only have been the act of thoughtless and ignorant men. He was admitted to the same situation he had formerly held, and endeavoured by constant employment, to beguile the months that must intervene before he should hear from Charlotte, or (as at more sanguine moments he sometimes thought) before he should see her.

CHAPTER XVI.

THOSE who have waited in agonies of anxiety for some decisive intelligence on events the most momentous, as regards their happiness and life, know what a sound, a step, a key turning in the lock, a board creaking, may be to one who listens: they must have felt that sudden throbbing of hurried pulses which makes every sound indistinct; the rush of blood to the head that blackens and obscures every object; the cold insensibility of the hands that will not enable the sufferer to unfold the letter which would tell him all he would know; the powerless feet,

that cling to the ground, when, if urged a few paces, the inquietude might end; and that master-pain, which attends the fruitless attempt to conquer all these sensations! And then, when one miserable paroxysm has subsided into the gnawing, fretting watchfulness that fills the dreary interval, the sudden recurrence of all these feelings, with deeper aggravation at the first distant sound! Surely those who have tasted this misery, have known the utmost of human torture, and can comprehend the feelings of Charlotte Carwell, during the Thursday in which she expected Dudley and her sentence.

She tried, poor creature! all the puerile stratagems with which the anxious attempt *not* to watch the flight of time, and with the usual ill success. Sometimes she prayed ardently and devoutly; and, when she ceased, flattered herself for some moments, that she had succeeded in obtaining the resignation she had sought. But her heart was only forced for an

instant from the earth, which held all her real and passionate affection. Though she spoke not during the Thursday, the gaoler, pitying her, repeatedly said that no intelligence could arrive till Friday afternoon. And now she judged the past fairly as to her own conduct. She had done evil that good might come: she had used a criminal expedient with the hope that it would extricate her from what she had considered the greatest of misfortunes; and she felt she deserved that such a measure should add to her distress.—Then, what was Dudley doing? Had he forgotten to use the promised exertion? Had he failed? Had he succeeded? "A few hours more," she repeated to herself, "a very few hours more, and all will be known:" yet those few intervening hours did not seem the less hard to be borne, or their issue less uncertain.

Towards evening the stillness of the prison enabled her to hear the hour as it tolled from

the clock, and was hoarsely murmured by the watchman. It was the only sound that reached her; and it seemed a voice warning her that time was passing, and that eternity was about to commence. It seemed, when her thoughts were wandering to the past, to summon her imperiously to prize and to use the short time in which penitence and supplication might still avail her parting soul.

"As the tree falls it must lie," we are told; and the Church of England forbears to pray for those who are sealed by death for eternity. But who can assure us that such prayers are vain? Those whom we loved and have lost, are still God's creatures, though in another state of existence. He "hateth nothing that he hath made:" he protects them, doubtless, there as here; and if their eternal welfare is the most ardent wish of our hearts, surely we may ask it of His mercy, "who despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart." A pious and learned writer has said, that he prayed for the

dead "conditionally;" and why should we shut such a source of comfort from the human heart? We allow of supplication in favour of those who, from disease or insanity, are as incapable of praying for themselves as those already dead.

But who was there to pray for Charlotte? She was already cut off from human sympathy; the separation which death alone usually causes had already taken place for her. The solitude of the grave would scarcely be more profound; and at first this reflection increased the bitterness of every other. But nothing induces self-command and exertion more successfully than the certainty that no hand but one's own will dry one's tears: and those who find no comforter on earth, feel they are more urgently summoned to seek one in Heaven. Charlotte felt this, and grew more calm.

The first dawn of morning roused her from the short and troubled sleep into which exhaustion had lulled her; and all the tumultuous anxieties of the preceding days were

renewed with tenfold violence. She had been taught to expect that her fate would be ascertained in the afternoon; and thought it not impossible that Dudley's appearance, or some intelligence from him, might even abridge that interval of expectation. Nevertheless the day, the heavy day, wore on in incertitude.

About four o'clock, a distant sound of steps, a faint echo of voices, a noise of a bolt withdrawn, prepared her for encreased dread or hope; but as the same, or nearly the same sounds had twice previously brought on the same painful fluttering of the heart, Charlotte endeavoured to compose herself, by supposing these movements did not regard her. At length the sounds drew nearer; she distinguished them as entering a cell close by: some conversation in low tones took place, then a few words spoken more loudly, then she could not hear any sound distinctly. The palpitation of heart, the hurried beating of all her pulses, deafened her ear; the rush of blood to the head blinded

her eyes, and, ere she was capable of listening with composure, the steps left the neighbouring cell, and approached her door. It opened, and the gaoler appeared, accompanied by two other persons, one of whom said, "The Recorder's report has arrived, Mrs. Carwell; I grieve that it is unfavourable, and would fain hope that your mind is prepared for the fatal termination of your distresses. This gentleman will, I am sure, offer such spiritual reflections as may be of use in your situation, and I heartily wish you may derive benefit from them."

The hesitating tone, the low hoarse voice in which this was spoken, would have told her at once the sense of the address, had she not learned it from the words.

A long pause ensued: the clergyman who had already visited her, advanced, and his companions, after some hasty and confused attempts to utter words of consolation and good-will, departed. Charlotte, stunned by the confir-

mation of her worst fears, was long silent. At length she told the clergyman that she now saw little reason to hope that intercession would be of service in obtaining mercy; but that she had depended very much on the efforts she had expected would be made in her favour by a friend; that if she could only learn whether Mr. Dudley was in town, she should be satisfied, and, finding his interference vain, would resign herself to a fate which now appeared inevitable.

She then wrote a few lines, which were immediately dispatched to Mr. Dudley's town-house, and heard, with the deepest disappointment and surprise, that Mr. Dudley had not appeared or been heard of there. It was true that a letter from his servant had been received, desiring the household to prepare for the arrival of their master on the preceding day; but Dudley had not arrived. What could, on such an occasion, have relaxed the speed he had so readily promised, and apparently intended to exert? Could he even now be engaged in

pleading her cause? Alas! that hope soon died away; no tidings of their master had reached the household on Saturday, and on Monday all his most zealous cares would be too late!

It signified little to know what had caused his neglect; she saw that she had nothing to expect from him, and could only wonder that any man could have the cruelty to encourage her dependance on him and then fail in such circumstances. Charlotte felt that nothing was left to her but to prepare to die, and to bid Carwell a last farewell. She knew this to be the most painful and important work she had still to perform, and it was not without floods of tears that frequently compelled her to cease from the task for a time, that she wrote the following letter.

"TO EDMUND CARWELL.

"THE circumstances that led me to a disgraceful death, my Carwell, will be viewed with indulgence by him for whose sake I have com

mitted a fatal error. They will be exactly detailed to you, and their publicity will unhappily attest their truth. Perhaps I ought to entreat you to forget me, but I have not strength of mind to do so; soon my only existence in this world will be in your memory. Do not let me lose it: whoever may be the companions of your after-life, remember the love of youth—remember Charlotte—her who forfeited her life for the chance of spending it with you! Better, and even more amiable others may be,—but will any one love you as I have done?

"Remember me, then, dear Edmund; I still claim my place in your heart, and all the more eagerly, as this is the last time I may urge it. My voice will soon be silenced for ever, and no friend is left to talk of me to you—to bid you take care of yourself for my sake. In the new and strange land where your days must pass, there will be nothing to remind you of me. The scenes where you spent your

youth, and she who dwelt in them with you will alike have vanished for ever. The recollection of both will perhaps fade away. You will hear of them no more.

"Keep this letter: it will perhaps catch your eye when many years of forgetfulness are past, and you will say, 'Charlotte loved me!'

"Ah, Edmund! forgive me; I know you will grieve long and deeply; I have more cause to fear that I shall be too well remembered, than that I shall be forgotten. May you think of me with affection, but without pain! May you find friends; and may a happier attachment make you amends for all you have suffered since we parted, and when we were together! Alas! *did* we suffer when we were *together?* I can hardly believe it possible!

"Do not grieve—at least, not long. Seek to be consoled; pray for yourself and for me. Employ yourself. If the spirits of the dead

have power to know what is passing here, mine shall not be far from you. I shall still share your joys and your sorrows—still hear and watch you. When I think that this lot may still be mine, the grave seems less dark, and death less dismal. Forgive me the discontent I was once ungrateful enough to show you, when I misconstrued your reserve at the beginning of our misfortunes. Conquer those feelings that my fate will cause, if they make you yield to indolence.

"I need not beg you to avoid the faults that divided us; they have been severely punished. Carwell, dear husband, best of friends, most beloved of human creatures, farewell! My last prayer will be for you—my last wish will be to have seen you before my death. CHARLOTTE."

CHAPTER XVII.

When Dudley had dispatched his answer to Charlotte, he caused every measure to be taken to facilitate his journey, which he began by riding the first few miles on the fleetest horse he possessed, intending to proceed in a post-chaise from the next town. When he reached it, he found it impossible to procure horses; four had just been harnessed to the carriage of a friend of his, who, the landlord added, could not have proceeded a quarter of a mile. Dudley, who had not dismounted during his discourse, instantly resolved to overtake his friend, who he made no doubt would readily relinquish his carriage and horses, when a

few words should have explained to him the importance of his journey. Dudley rode on with furious speed, and perceived with deep anxiety that the innkeeper must have stated the time of his friend's departure untruly, as, after riding two miles, he had not got within view of the carriage, though he ascertained it was preceding him.

At length, a turn of the road showed him the object of his pursuit ascending a high hill, but nearly a mile distant! and at the same moment he found his horse began to flag. He had unreasonably urged it, and now tried to persevere for the space that still lay between him and the carriage. But in vain. A few paces farther the horse fell; Dudley came with considerable force to the ground, and remained on it totally insensible.

It was not till many hours had elapsed that his situation was discovered. Those who found him conveyed him to the nearest town, and sent for medical assistance; and it was ascertained

that his head had suffered severe injury. A concussion of the brain ensued, and the treatment and care it required was prolonged many days. When partial consciousness returned, and still more when reason was completely restored, a sense of what had passed rushed on Dudley's mind. He hastily withdrew the curtain of his bed, and impatiently demanded his clothes, preparing at the same moment to rise. The incoherent questions which his renewed anxiety prompted, and his eagerness to rise, made the nurse, who was in waiting, believe that he was delirious; and, after some contention, he sunk back, exhausted by weakness, and she sent for his physician.

Dudley perceived the woman's error, but was too weak for some time to speak. At length when the physician was feeling his pulse, he exerted himself to explain what Charlotte's situation had been, and what his own was at the time of his fall, adding how anxious he was to hasten to town that he might assist her. The

nurse had vainly endeavoured to check Dudley, who declared, that to be restrained in saying what he had so much at heart, was more painful and irritating than any fatigue which talking could prove. At that time, to his agreeable surprise, the doctor admitted the truth of this reasoning, and heard his tale with patient attention. When it was finished, he replied, that he was happy to have it in his power to assure Mr. Dudley that Charlotte Carwell had been pardoned, or rather, that her sentence had been changed to transportation for life.

"You see, my dear Sir," said he, "that you may get well at your leisure, without the chance that the benevolent duty you so meritoriously imposed on yourself should interfere with the necessary attention to your health."

Dudley was too much touched to speak; he pressed the doctor's hand in silence, and sunk back in his bed. He had trembled to think of the three weeks which had elapsed since he set out on his unfortunate journey. After a

long pause, he told the physician that he was now willing to think only of himself, and to comply with every injunction given on account of his health, if permitted still to dedicate a few moments of the present time to furnishing Charlotte with money to provide what was requisite for her long and perilous voyage The doctor complied, Dudley wrote an order on his banker, and giving directions how it should be conveyed, dismissed the affair from his mind. Three weeks more of tranquillity and care restored him entirely.

While these events took place in England, what was the situation of Carwell? He was soon found to be so useful to Mr. Ranmore, so superior in education and manners to the greater part of those from whom one to fill his employment might be chosen; he was so eager to make himself necessary, and to prove himself trustworthy, that he was soon treated with brotherly regard, and at length became associated with his employer in a speculation which,

owing to his exertions, turned out profitable beyond expectation; and Mr. Ranmore, representing his conduct and qualities to the Governor, and offering to become answerable for him in every way, the most disagreeable restraints incidental to his position were removed, and he was received with cordiality by the more respectable part of society at Sydney.

Among the persons who came to Mr. Ranmore's house, there was one female more calculated to excite interest than the rest. She had evidently possessed a large portion of personal attraction, with a voice and manner equally distinguished and prepossessing. Though she could not be more than thirty-five years old, from the gravity of her manner and her dress, which was adapted to a more advanced age, she appeared much older. She rented a small house of Mr. Ranmore at Paramatta, where, with great diligence and success, she carried on the business of a schoolmistress. As few in the colony were competent to ex-

ercise such a profession, she was fortunate enough to collect so great a number of scholars, that she found some difficulty in discharging her duty to all; and it occurred to Carwell, when she one day chanced to lament to him the impossibility of finding an assistant, that when Charlotte rejoined him, such an employment would suit her mild and steady temper, her kind heart and fondness for children.

Perhaps he was not sorry to find a pretext for talking of his future plans with one whose manners were more congenial to his than the rough beings with whom, for a long time past, he had been conversant. It delighted him to describe Charlotte—to praise her character; and Mrs. Morley listened not only with patience, but with interest, and entered into all the details of his plans with a vivacity which rendered her society highly agreeable to Carwell. He related the chief circumstances of his life, and dwelt with pleasure on Charlotte's good conduct and innocence amidst the unworthy

and dangerous company in which his faults had involved her.

One day he requested Mrs. Morley to tell him by what event a person of her attainments and elevated way of thinking could have been destined to dwell in Australia. Mrs. Morley hesitated. "Though I am generally unwilling to talk of the past," said she, "which has been full of sorrow, humiliation, and errors, I rather wish that you, who have been so candid and confiding towards me, should know me as I am; and, as I hope to live much with your wife, I am desirous that the confidence should include her. To the rest of the world I entreat you to be silent. The sooner and the more entirely I am forgotten by all who knew me in former scenes, the better for them and me.

"My father held a distinguished situation in the East Indies. Having gone thither at a very early age, and having resided there as Resident in a very remote and solitary station for nearly thirty years, his habits had little of the Eu-

ropean in them, and he had no connexion with Great Britain: yet he always talked of, and looked forward to, spending his closing days in his native country, when he should have acquired wealth enough to satisfy his taste for luxury and magnificence. Perhaps it would not at any time have been easy for him to name what degree of fortune would have been sufficient for habits of indulgence that were every year encreasing; and every year the accounts from Europe seemed to indicate that few fortunes would suffice there for even a much more bounded scheme of expense than what he was willing to think ample and becoming.

"Thus my father declared every year that when two or three more had elapsed he should take leave of Asia for ever. He was just beginning to feel that the climate in some measure had affected his constitution, and had proceeded for change of air to a station which was reckoned more wholesome, when he became acquainted with an officer who had lately

returned from Europe to rejoin his regiment. This gentleman, whose name was Mackenzie, brought with him a daughter, who had just quitted a school in England, and was brought forth to make her fortune in India, with a complexion of lilies and bright roses, which the sun had not yet had time to wither.

"To this young lady my father made a proposal, and was immediately accepted. When the hot season was over, he led his young bride to the solitary and splendid durance of his own house. The ensuing year she gave me birth, and died immediately afterwards.

"My father's health in the four succeeding years was so much worse, that he found he could no longer postpone leaving India; and at five years old I found myself in England. On his arrival, my father proceeded directly to Cheltenham, having charged his London correspondent (a gentleman who had occasionally executed commissions for him during his long absence) to select some young lady of great

accomplishments and amiable character to superintend my education; my father added, that he was willing to give any remuneration to a governess properly qualified. In consequence of these instructions, a young person, highly recommended, arrived in a short time at Cheltenham.

"Miss Fenwick, who was afterwards to have so much influence on my destiny, was not handsome; she was even plain; her manners were quiet; red hair, a pale complexion, and slight undistinguished figure, would not have attracted attention to her exterior. But it was impossible for those who saw her often not to remark the determination, violence, and intelligence of her light blue eye, which, when animated with anger, appeared terrific. There was something that displeased me in her manner, and awed me at the same time; but this feeling soon gave way, when I found how caressing and indulgent she was disposed to be. She took great pains to win my affections,

and, in after-years, I have often thought she endeavoured to obtain that of my father; but, if such was her intention, it failed. After he had assigned us both comfortable apartments, he saw very little of us, and that little became daily less. In another year, I considered my father had done me a favour when I was permitted to play my sonnet, show my drawing, or dance the Guaracha in his presence. On those occasions he usually made me and Miss Fenwick a present, but at other times he rarely saw me. When we first arrived in England, he had imagined that a magnificent establishment was all that was necessary to collect the first class of society around him, and he was somewhat surprised to find he was so little sought.

"At Cheltenham he became acquainted with some persons who soon grew very assiduous in their visits and attentions, and these introduced others of their friends. Unfortunately, these were all men invited by my father's wealth and luxury to make his house a convenience and him a prey.

"My father was indolent, good-natured, and ostentatious. His friends borrowed his horses, and said they were the best in England; they drank his wine, and swore no man had such a cellar; they won his money, and wondered how he could have lost it, as he played whist so much better than any of them: they came daily, and assured him, with great truth, that they were not so happy in any other house; and he sometimes triumphantly said, when they were announced, 'What would these fellows do if I were to go back to India?'

"As our house was seldom visited by females, and as play and wine were its chief attractions, it is not surprising that Miss Fenwick and I never entered the sitting-rooms. We also had a splendid drawing and dining-room, where Miss Fenwick received the visits of her friends, and presided at the lessons of my masters. A handsome chariot, dedicated to our especial use, took us to Church and to Kensington Gardens when in town, and occasionally to the theatres.

" Miss Fenwick cultivated all those talents in me that might be shown to my father, my progress in dancing and music particularly. But her precepts and advice were scantily bestowed, in general, on any other subject. When displeased by my awkwardness or childish ways, her utmost menace was, ' Well, Miss Townshend, I can only say, if you do so, you will never be an accomplished woman :' and for many years my only ideas respecting vice were, that the wicked played out of time, danced ungracefully, and could neither draw, nor speak French and Italian. Of right and wrong, religion and piety, I never heard, except as mentioned in Madame de Genlis' works on education : but from these I drew only a confused idea, that besides being accomplished, I ought to give money and clothes to the poor, and to speak civilly : and as none of these duties fall very heavily on a good-humoured young person with money at her disposal, I was agreeably surprised to find how easy it was to be perfect.

"But the time came which was to show the fruits of an education which had not religion for its basis. Until I attained my sixteenth spring, things remained as I have described; and then it first occurred to me to wish the world should be aware that I was now "an accomplished woman;" to show my dancing at balls, my music at parties, and my beauty everywhere. To excite great and general admiration, and to reduce several of the handsomest, most agreeable, and distinguished young Peers in England to utter despair for life, and, at the end of a few years, choose the most amiable for my husband, was the reasonable plan I entertained for the future, and I thought it was time to reduce it to practice.

"Sometimes I wondered if there was any body in the society of my father worthy of being, not my husband, but one of my victims; and with great regret I was forced to conclude there was not one fit even to die for me. Mr. Peters took snuff, Sir Grayling Crowley was

too old, Mr. Davers swore loudly, and Major Johnstone's nose was very red.

" You smile, Mr. Carwell, and you well may do so, at such vanity and inexperience; but all that is ludicrous in my history is soon over! I have said that Miss Fenwick had taken much pains to gain my affection; and, as my education advanced, and my habits became more sedentary, we had daily less cause to disagree, and I grew still more fond of her. She behaved with increasing complaisance, and not unfrequently complimented me on my appearance, virtues, and accomplishments. She was echoed on these occasions by her visitors, and though they consisted of a few females of the middling class, and one or two men only, their homage, in the absence of other flattery, was still very satisfactory.

" One day, Miss Fenwick was reading the newspaper, and she suddenly exclaimed, 'Dear Miss Townshend, Mrs. Baines has been to see this piece they are acting at Astley's, and she

says it is the prettiest piece that ever was seen; and such scenery and music! And Mrs. Baines says, a pretty story, with a good *moral*. —I wonder if Mr. Townshend would approve of your going?' 'Certainly, if I go with *you*, dear Miss Fenwick. Do pray ask him. I should like so much to see it.' 'Well,' said she, 'since you wish it so much, I will ask your papa. But then Astley's is such a vulgar place. We can't go there without some one gentleman, at least. If you were a plain girl, my dear, I should not mind; but as it is—I know I may say this to you, Miss Townshend, because *you* have too much sense to be vain of your beauty—I should not say it to a vain girl, I assure you;—but we must have a gentleman or two, to take care of us.' 'Oh!' said I, 'papa will ask Mr. Davers, or Sir Grayling, to go with us.' 'No, my dear,' replied my governess; 'they would make some excuse that they may not be obliged to leave their wine. By-the-by, there 's my brother-in-law, Captain

Jolter, of the Gloucestershire, Indiaman, he would come, I am sure; and so would young Watson, my nephew, and he is a complete gentleman, I assure you, or I thould be the last person to propose such a thing.'

Miss Fenwick did propose to my father the scheme we had meditated, with the attendance of Captain Jolter and young Watson, followed with many encomiums on their respectability and good sense. My father consented; and on the evening agreed on, we went to Astley's with Mrs. Baines, at whose house the gentlemen waited our arrival. Captain Jolter was a red-faced, bald, and vulgar man, who did not speak much, but was a resigned listener; Mr. Watson was very good-looking, tall, and showy; in dress a beau, and rather assured in manner. He seated himself by me, and talked much during the evening; in the course of it he strenuously advised my governess to see some panorama that was then exhibiting, which she promised to do, and the next day we went

there. The first object that struck our eyes was Mr. Watson; and from that time forward I observed, wherever we went, we were surprised by the same rencontre: by some witchcraft he was always to be met with.

"It had been, for years, Miss Fenwick's custom to make me walk in Kensington Gardens from eleven in the forenoon till one, and we had very rarely seen any persons but nurses and children; but soon after our expedition to Astley's, we found Mr. Watson also made an early walk his constant practice. At church, he attended in the pew next to ours, and at the nursery-ground, where we went to purchase flowers, we were as certain to find Mr. Watson as to find a scarlet geranium. A woman is sure to detect the slightest mark of interest that can be addressed to her, even when entirely indifferent to the man from whence it comes; and I fancied I immediately discovered a respectful and hopeless attachment in Mr. Watson, not without surprise at his

daring to feel it, and some compassion for the heavy afflictions that were in store for him arising from such a source. I was also amazed at Miss Fenwick's blindness; I could not doubt that she would be highly displeased at her nephew's temerity, as she had so just an idea of my merit and beauty, and was also aware of the wealth and consequence of my father. It was rash in her to have allowed Mr. Watson to incur the risk of knowing me; for my own part, I considered, that unless he acquainted me with his affection, I was not obliged to know and discourage it; and it would be entertaining to see the state of his mind.

"Meanwhile our acquaintance proceeded on these terms for about a fortnight, when I began to see that he was really very handsome and amiable; and he, at first indirectly, began to make professions of deep and excessive attachment, which compelled me to make use of such discouragement as would not discourage,—for I had, in reality, no wish to rid

myself of importunity which amused me. Happy for me it would have been, had I only been amused; but the very romantic and heroic sentiments which, in the course of every conversation, were brought forward by Mr. Watson as his own way of thinking, and which I never doubted were the results of genuine feeling, made me regret sometimes that they had not fallen to the share of some man whom I might have loved: then I considered how unfortunate it was that a young man so handsome and deserving had not been born a Peer. In the next stage of our friendship, I reflected that it was not his fault that he had neither money nor rank, and yet I was obliged to treat him as if it was; and soon I was beginning to entertain vague projects, such as 'Was not my fortune enough for both? Could not my father, by dint of money, get him made a Peer?' Yet I was scarcely conscious how favourable my dispositions were to Mr. Watson, though it is probable that Miss Fenwick

and he were not idle observers of what passed n my mind.

" One summer evening, about a month before we were to leave town, I came into our drawing-room, and found my governess sitting opposite the pianoforte in deep thought. She remained so long there that I asked what she was thinking of: to which she made no reply. On my repeating the question with more earnestness, she burst into a violent flood of tears, which continued so long that I grew much alarmed, and sought all the remedies usually administered on such occasions. After taking some lavender-drops and sal-volatile, she was composed enough to tell me that I was the cause of her emotion; that, to her inexpressible distress, her nephew had confessed that he entertained an attachment to me so ardent and profound, that, knowing it could only end in disappointment and despair, he had determined to enlist as a common soldier, in a regiment stationed at Antigua, where he

hoped grief and the climate would end his life! 'Were he nothing to me, my dear Miss Townshend,' pursued my governess, 'the bare idea that a young man so amiable, so handsome, and every way so deserving, should perish miserably, would deeply affect me. But my own nephew—a being I have loved as my son—who could not fail to distinguish himself in any profession!' Miss Fenwick's sobs made her words almost inaudible. When she grew more calm, I confusedly attempted to say something consolatory.

"To this she replied, 'No, my dear Maria, my grief is too much mingled with self-reproach to be assuaged. Why did I introduce him to you? It is all my fault; I should have foreseen this disaster; I might have guessed that a young man with his spirited nature and generous feelings would have been incapable of dwelling on the cold considerations of fortune and worldly advantages. Alas! as he himself said, why is not Miss Townshend a

girl without a farthing, and why am not I a man of wealth? What joy it would be to me to reverse her destiny!' This last observation of Mr. Watson's was repeated by Miss Fenwick, both in letter and spirit, many times in the course of our conversation, which lasted some hours, until I felt a kind of shame at not being equally disinterested with Mr. Watson, and as indifferent on my side to pecuniary considerations. Probably my companion divined this, and it taught her how to work on the vanity her care had fostered. I spent an anxious and sleepless night, and dreaded the morning, which would probably bring Mr. Watson to fight his own battle."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"It will probably excite your wonder," continued Mrs. Morley, "that in our situation my father could so long have remained ignorant that we were constantly in the habit of seeing this young man, as it is very seldom that the head of a family has not an opportunity of observing such a circumstance, or that some friend does not inform him of it. But I have already told you that his society and hours were completely different from mine and Miss Fenwick's. His mornings were spent in bed—his evenings in the dining-room. For about an hour in the afternoon I played the piano or harp to him, and some

times read the newspaper, and showed him my last drawing. When he was confined with a fit of the gout, I spent the whole evening in his dressing-room, and occasionally accompanied him in his airings. His friends were without curiosity; I was still a child in their eyes. My father had trusted to Miss Fenwick's superintendence for eleven years; and, seeing that no evil had resulted from it, supposed the school-room as secure as the nursery. He knew my governess had visitors, but imagined I should always think them as much my inferiors, as I had really done at first.

"The next day after my conversation with Miss Fenwick, I received, through her, Mr. Watson's petition to bid me an eternal adieu! I knew not how to refuse this request, and agreed to receive him in her presence.

"I was much touched by his agitation and affliction, and the share in it taken by my governess; and at length was induced to assure him, that it was my fear of grieving and

offending my father, that obliged me to hope he would soon forget our acquaintance.

" Miss Fenwick seized this concession—' If my dear Maria, then, is only restrained by the very amiable feeling of fearing to grieve Mr. Townshend, I see at once how to reconcile your duty and your happiness. Why should your father be informed of your attachment at all? why should your situation change in outward appearance? and why should you not be privately united?'

" I will not weary you, Mr. Carwell, with the description of the joy and gratitude manifested by Mr. Watson at this suggestion, and of the persuasion used by my crafty governess. Suffice it to say, I was induced to become the wife of her nephew. The licence for the marriage of John Watson and Maria Townshend was procured, and we were privately married in the presence of Miss Fenwick, Captain Jolter, who gave me away, the clergyman, and his clerk. Every imaginable precaution was

taken to keep our union a secret, and no one person in the household, but she who had promoted it, had the least idea I was no longer Miss Townshend.

"In the first three months of my married life, though I felt much self-reproach at my disobedience to my father—much alarm lest it should be found out—and an obscure consciousness that I had not that attachment to my husband that I had expected to feel, I was not unhappy. My governess assured me that no marriage that ever took place was so suitable; that I was truly fortunate, and that we might perhaps hereafter convince my father of this. In the mean while, how was he the worse for what had happened?

"Though Miss Fenwick had taken such pains to induce me to marry her nephew, and thus secure to him my fortune, and prevent my marrying elsewhere, in which case she would lose her present situation, she was anxious to keep the event from my father, and

to continue in his family, either till we had some chance of gaining his consent, or till death should remove his authority,—an event which thirty years' residence in a hot climate, and his subsequent irregular habits, rendered probable. The little reflection with which young people see what is passing around them prevented me from observing that my father's health was certainly declining; that the frequent illnesses which I then thought accidental arose from the gradual progress of decay. The only thing that struck me as new was, that on one of my (now) frequent applications for money, which Mr. Watson prompted on his own account, my father expressed some displeasure, and complained that I was growing more extravagant when he had less to give me. I had been always so liberally supplied, that I was extremely surprised at finding some hesitation in complying with my demands, multiplied as they now became; for Mr. Watson had showy horses, servant, tilbury, &c. which

were maintained in fact by me; and I soon was obliged to contract debts, unknown to my father, with various tradesmen for the accommodation of my husband, who would buy every thing that struck him as desirable. Yet my vanity was gratified by seeing him ride by on a spirited horse, and all the idle people of Cheltenham (whither we had gone as usual at the conclusion of our London sojourn) staring after him, and wondering who he was, many exclaiming, 'A handsome man!' On these occasions, his aunt did not fail to remark that it was impossible not to admire him. Two circumstances, which occurred soon after, proved that this admiration was not quite so universal as I had believed.

"One day my governess had a bad headache, which kept her at home, and I accompanied my father, who was to take an airing with two of his inseparable friends in the open carriage; Mr. Watson happened to ride by, and, having probably seen the car-

riage, averted his face that he might not, by bowing to me in the presence of my father, excite any inquiry. He was so well-mounted and gaily dressed, that he caught my father's eye, who asked his friends if they knew that horseman; they said that they had often met him in gaming-houses, and proceeded to relate many anecdotes highly disadvantageous to Mr. Watson, and spoke of him altogether with so much contempt, that I could not recover from my surprise, which luckily was concealed from their eyes by my happening to wear a deep lace veil. I was afraid to mention this circumstance to Miss Fenwick, but it gave me great uneasiness, though sometimes I hoped it was envy and malice in my father's friends that had prompted their communication.

"When we returned to London, we were taking our usual walk in Kensington-gardens, having been prevented from going there at the early hour at which we were accustomed. There were many people walking there, and

many horsemen in the park. I was fatigued, and begged my governess to sit down We did so, and three ladies, whom we did not know, came also and sat down near us: some gentlemen of their party remained standing and conversing with them, so that it was impossible not to overhear their conversation, to which I paid, however, little attention for some time. Presently among the horsemen I perceived Mr. Watson, on a spirited horse and dressed in the extreme of the mode. 'What a singular-looking man! what can he be?' said one of the ladies. 'Now *that* man,' said another, 'thinks he is excessively fashionable; do look at him.' —'*That* man!' said one of the gentlemen; 'Oh, he 's a sort of swindler,—I 've seen him before.' He then went on in a lower voice to tell them a story, apparently to prove his assertion. I grew faint, for I could not doubt that it was my husband of whom they spoke.

"I perceived that Miss Fenwick had not heard them, at which I was glad, and still

more so when she proposed going home, saying, she felt unwell. We returned, and during our drive I could not avoid thinking that I ought to tell Miss Fenwick what I had heard respecting her nephew, if it was only to obtain from her some re-assurance as to his conduct and character. I stood however so much in awe of her, that it would require no small effort to begin, and she complained so much of increasing illness, that I postponed entering on such a conversation. I resolved to wait till she was well, but the next morning her indisposition had increased; she was so heavy and feverish that a physician was sent for, who pronounced her illness to be a dangerous fever. It continued, and in ten days she expired! leaving me, if not grieved, deeply shocked, and the most forlorn and distressed of human creatures. Though I had latterly began to see the treacherous part she had acted in its true light, still she was the only human being who knew my situation, and with whom I could discuss it; for the constant con-

straint I underwent in seeing Mr. Watson had prevented my ever acquiring confidence in him, and the opinions respecting him which had lately reached me had involuntarily diminished my good-will.

"Ere I had recovered from the shock of this event, I became alarmed by the augmented illness of my father, who only survived Miss Fenwick about two months. During the latter part of his illness I was extremely disgusted by the want of feeling displayed by my husband, who was continually talking of the mode of life we should now adopt, or, in other words, how he should spend the money my father had left. We agreed not to declare our marriage till my father's affairs should be arranged, and his debts paid and his will known, lest he should have left his money with any restrictions on my disposal of myself. I expected that his creditors would be numerous, but they proved infinitely more so than I had foreseen. Indeed, so far from being a wealthy heiress, I found

myself a pennyless orphan! The creditors seized every thing, and even then there remained no inconsiderable debt, so that it was inexpedient for me to take out letters of administration.

"I had nothing, absolutely nothing left! Mr. Watson made some faint efforts to console me, but at length said, 'You see, Maria, that it is impracticable we should remain together; let us forget we are married at all—nobody knows it. I shall proceed to some friends at Charlestown, in America, and you must go out as a governess or lady's-maid. There is no use in starving, you know, and I really can't support you; nay, I have incurred many debts on the expectation of having wherewith now to pay them: if I do not make haste, I shall not have an opportunity of flying from this country.' He then execrated his own folly, in having trusted to his aunt's statement of our circumstances, instead of ascertaining the truth himself; and again advising me to

seek some employment that might support me, bade me adieu and departed.

" Though I had been persuaded to marry, I had never loved this man; yet, as he was the only person to whom I could turn for advice and protection, his indifference and flight at that moment added greatly to my sorrow; I reproached myself more than ever for my duplicity to my father, and saw its just punishment in my present misfortunes. The insight I now obtained into the views of all who had surrounded us, filled me with terror and humiliation: all the claims I formerly thought I had on the attachment of our friends, and the respect and good-will of the world in general, seemed to be swept away at one stroke. To my poor father, the only person who had really loved me, I had failed in my duty, and this self-reproach haunted my mind incessantly.

" The creditors had disposed of the lease of our superb house in Portland-place, and I was preparing to go into a small lodging, for

which I had not the means of paying above a few weeks, when the clergyman, who had paid the last duty to my poor father, and had learned my situation, called, and requested permission to see me. He mentioned having been desired by a lady of fortune and respectability in the country, to procure a female companion for her, and advised me to allow him to recommend me. I was too young to live alone, and was almost without money, so I readily agreed to the proposal. He undertook to arrange with her the necessary preliminaries, and I heard with some satisfaction, a week afterwards, that Mrs. Pierrepoint had expressed herself pleased with his account of me, offered a handsome yearly allowance, and had sent money to provide for my expenses in travelling to Langley Hall, where she resided. The good clergyman continued to interest himself in my preparations, and saw me enter the coach which was to convey me thither.

" I was ushered, on my arrival, into a very

handsome drawing-room, where a thin, pale, elderly lady was sitting, who received me with grave complacency. I felt great curiosity to know her, and gazed around, as if the objects that surrounded her would indicate her disposition. On a large, shining, rose-wood table by her, was lying a snuff-box and a small netting-box; the rest of the furniture was elegant, but formal, and not in the convenient confusion and profusion I had been used to see. That which struck me most was the uncommon stillness of the whole establishment. Langley Hall was a handsome country-house, in a flat country, with little wood and few neighbours near; it was Mrs. Pierrepoint's jointure-house, and would, at her death, become the property of Colonel Luxborough, her nephew and heir.

"The life my protectress lead was the most monotonous ever seen. She arose late, and after breakfast I read to her such books as Ebers and Hookham choose to dispense to those

country subscribers who have no choice of their own; during which time she employed herself in netting purses, in summer, and in winter in working at a foot-stool in cross-stitch. In both occupations she made frequent mistakes, which it was my business to rectify. The carriage was announced at a stated hour, and we took an airing, which always lasted two more; during which time, she always lamented the dulness of all the books she read; adding, that she loathed work, and was tired of all the objects she saw when driving about the neighbourhood; and that certainly Langley Hall was in the ugliest part of the ugliest county in England. This last complaint was so frequent, that at last I ventured to ask if she did not sometimes visit other places for a short time. Her reply was in the negative, and added, that though she hated Langley Hall, she disliked every other place much more.

"After our airing, which concluded as the first dinner-bell rang, half an hour was devoted

by Mrs. Pierrepoint to her toilette, which, though not unsuited to her years, occupied as much time and attention as it could have done at any period of her life. She was long in deciding on, and afterwards highly discontented with, every article she purchased. But her dinner was the greatest trial in her day. Though every thing was the best that could be procured, and her cook an excellent one, she never approved of any dish that was presented, and often predicted that she should be starved at last. In the evening, we again read and worked as before, and sometimes played chess or back-gammon. Mrs. Pierrepoint said she *always* lost; and when she won, complained I had *permitted* her to do so, which she hated most of all.

"As she one day observed that she loved music, but could not bear to play herself, I told her, if she pleased, I would endeavour to amuse her in that way: and afterwards I gene-

rally was desired to play and sing during a part of the evening: yet, though it was the accomplishment I had cultivated with most success, Mrs. Pierrepoint told me every time I quitted the instrument, that she did not like my style of playing, and that my voice, though I sang well, was of a disagreeable quality;—but she feared she should never hear music again to please *her*. She owned, in *that*, she was difficult to please. I thought so too. At half-past ten every night we lighted our candles and retired to bed, not before she had expressed a fear that she should not sleep, and given an assurance that she never did sleep, and also lamented either the heat or cold. She seldom paid or received visits; and when obliged to do so, her wailings were incessant and piteous. Yet Mrs. Pierrepoint was not ill-natured, nor absolutely ill-tempered, though always fretful and repining. She was dull, indolent, vain, and cold-hearted. When her youth and beauty were

gone, no other object of interest remained to her on the 'disenchanted earth.' She was *Ennui* embodied.

"At stated times of the year she liberally contributed to the wants of the poor in her neighbourhood; but her gifts were dispensed by her maid, or by me. She received no pleasure from learning what the necessities were which she had the power to relieve, and no reward in seeing the enjoyment of those who had shared her bounty, which was rather yielded as a tax, than presented as a gift. This extraordinary aridity of disposition produced its own punishment. Mrs. Pierrepoint was loved as little as she loved others.

"After I had been at Langley some months, by rising early, and going to bed later than the lady of the house, I obtained time to read, walk, and do whatever I chose; and, by degrees, got so accustomed to her demands upon my attention, that my life, though dull and uninteresting, was less irksome than I had ex-

pected. Of Watson I received no intelligence from the time he quitted me; and though at first I was grieved at being thus abandoned by one on whom I had so many claims, after two or three years had elapsed, my indignation exhausted itself, and I almost forgot such a being had ever existed. I have mentioned that I read a great deal, but, I am sorry to add, religion formed no part of my study. On that subject I continued as ignorant and unreflecting as ever. Some of my faults and follies were necessarily cured by the change in my situation. Rare as my intercourse with society was, I had sufficient opportunities of comparing the notice taken of Miss Townshend, Mrs. Pierrepoint's humble companion, with the attention paid to Miss Townshend, daughter to the rich East Indian. I fancied that my views of the world were more just, and that mortified vanity was humility.

"I had just completed my seventeenth year when I was placed with Mrs. Pierrepoint, and

ten years were spent with her, not without bitter internal repinings at my destiny, but with external calmness and good temper. I felt no gratitude to Heaven for my health, youth, safety, and for living in plenty, and with much time at my own disposal,—for the opportunity given me of improving my mind and correcting my faults. I reckoned nothing but what was disagreeable in my situation, and forgot all the blessings that were still in my lot. The last two of these ten years my protectress declined in health and strength: her complaints and lamentations had been so incessant upon every subject when she was apparently in perfect health, that till her feebleness and a change in her countenance were obvious, neither her servants nor I could believe that she had really any increase of ailments. At length, however, a change in her habits was perceptible; her discontent was less frequently expressed, her lamentations more rare. Mrs. Pierrepoint was dying!

"One day she desired me to write to her nephew, Colonel Luxborough, and summon him to visit her: 'Though,' continued she, 'it is very likely he will make some excuse to avoid it: I never find any body willing to do what *I* wish.'

"Nevertheless, Colonel Luxborough arrived to disprove the assertion, in as little time as could be allowed for his journey; and it required all Mrs. Pierrepoint's habitual discontent to be enabled to find fault with him. He was about thirty-five, remarkably handsome, graceful, and gentlemanlike; grave in manner, scrupulously just in all his dealings, and earnestly religious; fastidious and severe in judging female manners; generous and kind-hearted to all about him, and perfectly frank and sincere. He was already possessed of a large, independent fortune, which would be much augmented by inheriting that of his aunt.

"He was so agreeable in conversation, and knew so well how to avert the cloud that her

presence threw around her, that our home appeared changed, as if by magic. Without submitting to her injustice, he beguiled her of her discontent. As she was daily yielding to the pressure of sickness and age, she prolonged the time spent in her bed, and often slept in her chair; so that Colonel Luxborough and I were often left *tête-à-tête*, and the more I saw of his disposition and manners, the more I esteemed and admired him. His conduct towards me was polite, respectful, and friendly; and I sometimes could not help regretting that he had not been known to me eleven years sooner.

"One evening, Mrs. Pierrepoint, after expressing herself on many points with a kind of desultory fretfulness, sunk back in her chair and slept profoundly. We fell into conversation that amused us both. Colonel Luxborough suddenly paused, and gazing at her exclaimed, 'What a melancholy circumstance it is, Miss Townshend, that my poor aunt is

not more religious! How much happier would she now be, and how much happier she might have been in times past, had such been her case!' I assure you, Mr. Carwell, I did not mean hypocritically to pretend to feelings and opinions which in reality were not mine; but involuntarily in my reply, and all through this conversation, I expressed myself as if deeply impressed with those truths, which, in reality, I had considered very little, if at all. In fact, I echoed the sentiments he had uttered, and added how fervently I wished that such were Mrs. Pierrepoint's.

"Colonel Luxborough was evidently pleased, and frequently we conversed on the same, and other subjects. He observed that I was attentive to his aunt, and knew that I had spent ten years under her eye irreproachably, and that I had come to Langley extremely young. Mrs. Pierrepoint had informed him of my previous misfortunes, and had involuntarily done me more than justice in her ac-

count. Colonel Luxborough became warmly attached to me. Two months after his arrival Mrs. Pierrepoint died. Though I could not regret her for herself, I did regret being cast again upon the world: but, while meditating where to go, Colonel Luxborough begged to see me, and, with his assurances of devoted affection, entreated me to believe that it was the peculiarity of the situation in which we were placed that hurried him into an avowal, knowing that I was going to withdraw from Langley.

"Though flattered and delighted at being assured of what I had earnestly wished and hoped—that Colonel Luxborough loved me,—I was horror-stricken at the idea that perhaps Watson still lived—that I was a married woman! that I was prevented from being the happiest of human beings by being bound to the most unworthy! My agitation was extreme; and Colonel Luxborough, who saw it was not caused by feelings hostile to his suc-

cess, imagined that I was overcome by his unexpected declaration. He begged I would compose myself, did not wish to press my answer at that time, and hoped I would allow him to see me on his return from a meeting he was going to have with a lawyer at the neighbouring town, on business relative to his aunt's affairs. He departed, and I trust few have ever spent three hours of greater misery than those I passed at that time."

CHAPTER XIX.

MRS. MORLEY'S agitation for some time interrupted her narrative. She paused awhile, and then, endeavouring to compose herself, resumed.—"After many bitter passions of weeping," said she, "which I did not even try to repress, I thought of sitting down to write my wretched story, and of leaving it for Colonel Luxborough to read after I was gone. This would spare me the deep mortification of blushing in his presence for the fatal misconduct of my early life, and account for my rejection of the happy destiny he had placed within my reach. I would then go . . . but whither? I knew not one spot of earth wherein I might

find a reason for preferring it to another. To whatever place I retired, I should be a friendless and unknown wanderer, bound by invisible fetters in perpetual loneliness, and doomed to perish in solitary penury.

"I sat down to write, but my tears fell so heavily on the paper that I could not trace a legible line. At last I tore the many sheets of paper I had begun, and went into the grounds, meaning to postpone my task till I should have attained a greater degree of calmness.

"My weary eyes were at length dry, yet I dreaded to return to the house, to the painful undertaking which could not be deferred, as Colonel Luxborough was to return the next day. 'Suppose,' thought I, 'that, while I am inflicting this misery on myself, Watson should be already dead? He has been absent ten years. He said he never would return. Probably he *is* dead!—And if he lives, who would be injured by my marriage with Colonel Luxborough? not Watson certainly: my happiness

would be complete; I should make Colonel Luxborough happy. Besides, I was so young, so deceived in my first marriage!'

"The temptation to accept Colonel Luxborough, and conceal the past, grew every moment stronger. Nobody was interested in my fate; very few knew me personally; and those few only as Miss Townshend. And if, by some deplorable chance, Watson should survive and be in England, who, in the happy Miss Townshend, when become the wife of Colonel Luxborough, could trace the forlorn Maria Watson? I paused and pondered, and at last resolved to deceive the good and generous Luxborough! I came back to the house fainting with fatigue, but buoyant in spirits in spite of self-reproach, which was at that time almost stifled by my joy at having found means to obviate, as I thought, the difficulties that surrounded me. The servant, who, finding I had been walking so many hours, came to offer me refreshment, regarded me with so much surprise

that I cast my eyes on the glass and felt her scrutiny was justified; my hair and clothes were dripping with rain, my eyes swelled with past tears, yet sparkling with present joy.

"Again my resolution varied as I reflected; my conscience suggested how much more honourable it would be to tell my history to Luxborough, and, if his regard survived its disclosure, to make him endeavour to ascertain the fate of Watson. If he was no more, I then might be irreproachable and happy; and if he yet lived, I should preserve my own esteem and that of Luxborough; and however humble my lot might be, I should have the cheering consciousness of having lost the happiest for conscience sake.

"Then, again, I recollected the weary years I had spent with Mrs. Pierrepoint, in poverty and dependance, unloved and unloving. Perhaps the next protectress I should find would be ill-natured as well as unamiable, and I might live to see Colonel Luxborough's attachment

transferred to some more deserving object. I could not bear to think on such a termination of my hopes; and I finally resolved—to deceive Colonel Luxborough!

"I mistook the calm which followed my having resolved on my line of conduct, for restored tranquillity. I congratulated myself in having overcome my internal struggle; and, at my next interview with Colonel Luxborough, agreed to become his wife. Our marriage took place three weeks afterwards, and I accompanied my husband to Ireland, where he intended to spend the greater part of his time. Castle Luxborough was a magnificent old place, surrounded by the most beautiful scenery. Nothing could be more comfortable than the house; all the arrangement of my husband's establishment was splendid, yet suited to his fortune. We had several agreeable neighbours, and I had the good fortune to please the society into which I was introduced. Colonel Luxborough took great interest in the poor of his neigh-

bourhood; he undertook the conduct of every benevolent plan for ameliorating their condition, and was gratified by the share I had in these pursuits. He was respected and feared by the common people; reproved, advised, consoled, and relieved them; was chosen umpire in all disputes that might otherwise have caused litigation: he maintained two schools at his own expense, which we both superintended; he was an example to the country-gentlemen, and was sometimes rallied by them for the fervour of his interest in all these circumstances. Though grave, he was agreeable in conversation, and was pleased to fill his house with cheerful and distinguished society.

"The only thing which excited his serious and lasting displeasure, was any levity on religious subjects; his marked coldness and lessened intercourse with such who offended in this particular, either prevented its recurring in his presence, or rendered his acquaintance with them so slight that they seldom obtained

an opportunity of repeating the offence. His conduct towards me was attentive and affectionate in the highest degree, and to all it was most exemplary; yet there was something in his character which I cannot describe, which awed and intimidated most persons who knew him intimately, and I, as well as others, felt its power. Perhaps it had more influence on me than others, having only known, during my previous life, persons without principle, of weak and confused notions of right and wrong, which were on every occasion sacrificed to expediency. The composed and severe determination with which he acted, in conformity to any opinion he had adopted as right, startled and overpowered me; I felt that, if a day was to come that could show him my past actions, I had nothing to hope from his mercy, and every thing to fear from his justice.

"For the first time in my life since childhood, I was beyond measure happy; and, if at intervals an undefined fear of possible misfor-

tune visited me, I succeeded in preventing it from dwelling on my mind. Four years elapsed without any other interruption to my felicity, than the vexation elicited by the following occurrence. Among the acquaintances that I preferred and saw most frequently, was a lady named Irvine. She was handsome, lively, and accomplished; possessed a good fortune, and was generally liked. I saw her often. One day, she walked aside with me, and told me she had a favour to ask, and hoped that, without any great sacrifice on my part, I might be able to add materially to her happiness.

"'I have never,' she continued, 'talked much to you of my sister, Mrs. Waldgrave; but you have probably heard of her. She is the most beautiful, agreeable, and charming woman in the world; she was married, when very young, to old Mr. Waldgrave; he was a very bad husband, and I must own to you that Eudosia conducted herself with great imprudence; and then, you know, people

are so very ill-natured! I am sure Eudosia had no idea things would be taken up as they were! and so many women envied her being so very handsome. But Waldgrave parted with her, and died suddenly; she has lived in retirement for the year of her mourning, and is now anxious to come about again in the world. Many people would help us, but each is afraid to begin. Now, my dearest Mrs. Luxborough, you, who are so correct yourself, and so much beloved, and Colonel Luxborough, who is so influential here—if you would call upon her and ask her to Castle Luxborough, every body would follow your lead, and poor Eudosia would be restored to society. She is so weary of her solitude! and so beautiful and brilliant! I declare she is a little like you, but not quite so handsome.' Mrs. Irvine added many entreaties and much flattery to induce me to promise compliance, and I felt every wish to oblige her; I saw no reason why Mrs. Waldgrave should not have repent-

ed and become a very well-conducted woman, but I felt a vague presentiment that Luxborough would not be willing to render her this service.

"I did not, however, say this, but promised I would ask him. The next time I saw him, I gave him Mrs. Irvine's petition; he heard all I had to say with deep attention, but, before he spoke, an air of grave surprise and displeasure spread over his countenance. 'My dear Maria,' said he, 'I am sure you have not reflected on the impropriety of complying with Mrs. Irvine's wishes. Mrs. Waldgrave is culpable, I cannot doubt. In her situation, the very wish to be restored to society is a fault; for such a woman there is nothing left but penitence and solitude; her time should be divided between prayer and acts of benevolence. Fortunately for Mrs. Waldgrave, she is wealthy, and has not even the obligation of providing for her own wants, or that of a family, by industry; she has no excuse, there-

fore, for letting her thoughts wander to a world, the recollection of which ought to be painful to her in proportion as she is contrite and humble.' Luxborough then spoke generally on the situation of persons who had erred like Mrs. Waldgrave, and expressed himself with so much vehemence and severity, that every word was as the stroke of a dagger to me; and had he not been called away, the agitation and grief which I could not conceal, would have been enough to excite his suspicion. Before we met again I had time to compose myself; but the certainty of incurring his hatred and contempt in the highest degree, should any accident acquaint him with the truth, and the pain of being obliged to dissemble with one I loved and honoured so much, was a considerable diminution of my happiness, which had hitherto been so great as to lull even my remorse. Often for months I had forgotten that I was not what I seemed to him and others, but a miserable wretch,

who had no real right even to the valued name she bore.

" The effect of this incident on my mind was so violent, that if Luxborough quitted me even for his morning's ride, I felt as if some discovery would take place before his return, and his coming back to dinner seemed an unexpected blessing. Sometimes I started from my sleep shrieking, and implored him to forgive me. A few months, however, of peace from all external disturbance, considerably weakened these feelings, and I regained some portion of my former peace.

" In the winter we went to Dublin, on business, for a few weeks, which were spent very agreeably. I had intended to employ myself, during the last few days of our stay, in making many purchases of silks and lace, but, not finding some of the articles I had wished for, I complained to my maid that I must go back to Castle Luxborough without them. Returning one day to dress for dinner, she mentioned

that a smuggler had been recommended to her, who, it seems, had the very articles I wanted. I objected to buying from him, as Colonel Luxborough disapproved of encouraging these people. She replied, that as I had not been able to get what I wanted at the regular shops, there would be no harm in seeing his things. The next day I was breakfasting by myself, (Luxborough had gone on an excursion that was to detain him two or three days,) when my maid brought in a piece of lace, saying this was a specimen of the smuggler's goods. He was then in the hall. 'Very well, send him up,' I replied, putting my book aside. The smuggler entered, carrying some small boxes which he laid before me, and I idly turned over the goods, till, selecting a piece, I asked the price, and looked at the smuggler. His eyes were fixed on me with a look of curiosity and amazement. I looked again, and, in spite of a red face, and embrowned complexion, I could not doubt that it was Watson who stood

before me! I did not shriek; I sat mute and horror-stricken, vainly hoping I was dreaming, or deceived by some dreadful resemblance; when, after a long pause, he exclaimed,—'Why, Miss Townshend,—Maria,—you do not seem very glad to see me again!' I attempted to speak, but vainly, till he said, 'What has happened? You are called Mrs. Luxborough! Are you married again?'—'Yes, Watson,' said I, rising, 'I *am* married again. Yesterday —*only* yesterday—I was the happiest of created creatures. To-day, you are here, and all misery is a mockery to mine! I adore Luxborough, I cannot and will not deceive you; but I am ready for destruction—I do not even wish to live. I felt this must come, and now—I can die.'

"I suppose what I felt was depicted in my countenance; Watson appeared touched, poured out a glass of water, and urged me to compose myself. He paused, appeared undecided, and frightened by my violent emotion; and,

after waiting a considerable time, and finding it did not abate, he said, 'If you will give me your oath that you will take no measure till you see me again, I will go now, and return to-morrow at the same hour; you will then be better able to think and to speak. Meantime, for your own sake, conquer your feelings, conceal them from your servants—perhaps all may be arranged.' He departed.

"When my perturbation had a little subsided, I sought the meaning of his last words, and, vague as they were, I hoped he saw or knew of some informality in my first marriage, and I felt a ray of hope. When Watson came first into the room, he was entirely ignorant that he should see me in Mrs. Luxborough. He had spent the last fourteen years principally in America, in a mode of life I fear little creditable to his character or advantageous to his fortune. From some slight circumstances not worth detailing, he had imagined that I had entered into some menial situation in England,

and as he had too many debts in London to wish to revisit it, and no reason to seek me, he had never attempted to do so. Accident alone, therefore, had produced this miserable rencontre! What was now to become of me? In my distraction I at first intended to make a full confession to Luxborough, but I felt such agony at the thought of what he would undergo, and of the indignation and contempt with which he would treat me, that I dismissed the idea. Yet all depended on Watson's will. I could not remain in my present situation if he would not permit it; and to go *with* him, the disgraced partner of a flight that would be the world's wonder for its apparent perfidy and folly! it was not to be thought of! Oh, how I wished the earth would by some miracle close over me and put an end to my struggle and perplexity! Sometimes I thought of beseeching Watson's mercy to leave me as I was; to remind him of Miss Fenwick's treacherous cruelty in betraying the trust my father had

confided to her. Sometimes I felt tempted to end my existence. I had however strength of mind to hide from my servants all trace of my misery.

" Early the next morning I received a letter from Luxborough. The kindness, good sense, and confident affection that was apparent in all he wrote, would have been sufficient to rend a heart more hard than mine. Alas! it was in the power of a wretch like Watson, by one word, to separate me from him.

" Eleven o'clock brought back my dreaded visiter. I believe, when he quitted me the day before, it had been with the intention of gaining time to arrange what he might extort from my fears. 'Maria,' said he, 'I see how much you dread my claim; I have no wish to make you unhappy; I will leave you to this Colonel Luxborough.' My eager and incoherent thanks he interrupted—'When I say I leave you in your present protection, observe, it is upon certain conditions, which certainly are not unrea-

sonable:—what is the pin-money Luxborough allows you?'—'Five hundred pounds a year.'—'Well, then, you shall pay me three hundred pounds, in two half-yearly payments, to be left with a friend of mine, and I will never trouble you again as long as they are paid punctually.'

"Again I eagerly thanked him, and he replied—'Yes, I think my conduct towards you is generous; for, in fact, you are *my* wife. A word of mine would deprive you of every thing; and the two hundred pounds a year that you will still receive from Luxborough, is in fact given by *me*.' I was ready to admit this, or any other assertion he made, to be perfectly just, and then asked him, with an air of anxiety I could scarcely disguise, when he should return to America? 'I am not certain,' said Watson; 'it depends upon circumstances; but,' added he, laughing maliciously, 'I am deeply indebted to you for the interest you retain in my future plans.' I was too heart-sick to try

to flatter him with assurances of friendship and good-will; and at last he departed, bearing with him the first half-yearly payment I was to make.

"'Maria, you are not looking well,' said Colonel Luxborough; 'you are certainly paler and thinner than when I left you. This town does not agree with you.' I said I thought I should never find any place where I felt the air so pleasant and healthy as at Luxborough, and that I longed to return there. Return we did—

'——— But not to me return'd
The vernal joy my better years had known.'

Every mile that drew me farther from the scene where I had suffered so much, it is true, lightened my heart of part of its load; but the dread of Watson — of losing Luxborough — the necessity of disguising what I felt, all conspired to take the enjoyment of my former happy life from me. How much I

was in alarm every hour may be judged from the following circumstance: — I was called down to receive the visit of a neighbouring gentleman; Colonel Luxborough was with him in the drawing-room, and had just asked who had hired a villa near us which had for some time been to let. Our neighbour replied, 'I have not yet seen him, though I have left my card, but his name is *Watson*.' I heard no more; it seemed to me that my worst fears were realized; I fainted in Luxborough's arms. I recovered, and my illness was by all attributed to a long ride in hot weather; and I afterwards discovered that the possessor of the villa was a perfect stranger, in whom there was nothing to dread but the name, which it was so painful to me to hear.

"Perhaps an interval uninterrupted by any uneasiness caused by Watson might have calmed my mind. I was not, however, destined to enjoy such an intermission; for, at the end of a few months, I received an intima-

tion that he had been unfortunate in a pecuniary transaction, and required some assistance, besides the regular remittance to which my promise had entitled him. I procured and forwarded the money; but it proved only a prelude to other demands, which at last were repeated so frequently, as to make it impossible to comply with them much longer without causing observations that must finally lead to discovery. Before my unfortunate journey to Dublin, much of the liberal allowance I received from Colonel Luxborough was applied to acts of benevolence, as they are usually called, often performed only to please him, and sometimes to relieve my conscience; for, in common with many persons who have little religious knowledge, I fell into the mistake of supposing there was some atoning power in distributing alms, by which I bought off part of my offences.

"The constant demands of Watson absorbed not only the money so applied, but circum-

scribed the sum I was obliged to expend on my dress, and those expenses which my situation required. Every day increased my embarrassments, and the difficulty of hiding them. I began to see that some dreadful crisis was at hand, like a man falling down a precipice, who catches at every tuft of grass, yet knows he must fall. I had borrowed from Colonel Luxborough's agent nearly a half-year's pin-money in advance, when I received the following letter:—

'TO MRS. LUXBOROUGH.

'IN spite of what you sent last week, I can hardly get on, and I am sure, if you chose to exert yourself, you might do much more. However, on the present occasion it is not money I am going to ask, but a small favour, which will save your purse for some time, and which I know you can easily manage for me, if you are so disposed. It is this. Tell Colonel L. that an old friend of your father's is

now in Dublin, and that you wish he should be invited to Castle Luxborough. I will write you to-morrow a letter which you can show him. I hear your Colonel has excellent shooting, fishing, and good wine; I am resolved to have a little of each, and while I am with him, of course, I shall not need money; and I am sure *he* owes *me* a good turn.

'Yours sincerely,

JOHN WATSON.'

"The effect of this letter on my mind may be conceived. Exclusive of the suffering of seeing Watson constantly, the difficulty of preserving a disengaged and friendly manner to him — the doubt of what his manner to me might be — the humiliation of presenting him to Luxborough as a chosen friend of my father's and mine, made it next to impossible that such a step should not be attended with utter destruction. I dared not refuse, yet I hoped to be able to dissuade Watson from

wantonly subjecting me to such cruel risk. I wrote a long letter to him of entreaty and argument, avoiding every thing likely to pique or irritate, and awaited his answer in an agony of suspense. His reply I desired might be sent in a parcel, and left at a neighbouring village, to which I walked to obtain it, not daring to bear the trial of opening it before Luxborough. With agonies of anxiety and misgiving I dragged myself to the inn where it was to be found, and read the following:—

"'I WILL not be trifled with. To-morrow I shall write to you by the post, and if I do not receive an invitation in the next ten days from Castle Luxborough, perhaps the time may shortly come when *you* will be glad of an invitation to that house.

'Yours sincerely,

J. W.'

"The next morning's post brought a few

lines, beginning 'Dear Madam,' and respectfully informing me of the writer's being in Dublin, and wishing, as an old friend of my father's, to pay his respects at Castle Luxborough.

"After fortifying my nerves with a strong dose of opium, I obtained sufficient self-possession to show this to Luxborough, who readily expressed his wish to receive any friend of my father's, and immediately wrote to Watson with the most cordial politeness to invite him to his house.

"What did I not endure in witnessing the unsuspecting kindness of Luxborough? More than once I felt tempted to end my miserable life. What would I have then given that I had at first had the courage to meet the just punishment of my early disobedience, and owned to Luxborough that I could not be his wife. I should, on the whole, have suffered less, even setting remorse aside, which now added its ceaseless sting to constant

anxiety and fear. A few days more brought Watson, whose behaviour was sufficiently discreet not to give me much alarm for his intentions. Luxborough received him with the most friendly politeness; but he was not many days in the house, before I saw how uncongenial a guest Watson must prove to a host so elegant in manner—so cultivated in mind. In the morning, shooting and other field sports amused Watson, and saved me the misery of beholding him; but when the company drew round the fire before our late autumnal dinner, then began my diurnal punishment!

"Watson was so good-looking, in spite of the injuries which varieties of climate and habits of drinking had produced in his appearance, that while silent his vulgarity and very moderate understanding were not apparent, but, as his spirits rose from the influence of wine, his conversation was grievous to me, and must have been a great annoyance to Luxborough, who, however, from delicacy to me,

would make no comment on my father's friend. But I, who had so long made his countenance my study, could detect through the veil of good-breeding, a grave surprise, a slight displeasure, and a watchfulness to avert such topics of discourse as rendered Watson more particularly disagreeable.

"A month, a wretched month went by, and to me seemed to have lasted years, when a new subject of uneasiness was added: Watson appeared to have no intention of ending his most unwelcome visit; I looked forward to that time as the moment of the most perfect happiness I could expect during life; I felt that I must endeavour to persuade him to go, and began to think whether I could not, by a promise of early pecuniary assistance, hasten that much-desired moment. Since the beginning of the visit, as Watson's behaviour had been as unexceptionable as I could have hoped from him, I had carefully avoided seeing him, except in company, when I showed that de-

gree of attention due to a guest and old acquaintance. We had never met without the rest of the party, which had now departed except one old gentleman, who was to go the next day. My object was to induce Watson to go at that time; and I had a more plausible reason for pressing it without offending him, as it had long been settled that Luxborough and I were then to stay a few days at Lord M.'s.

"I resolved, therefore, to speak to him privately. Our other visiter rode out; Luxborough I knew was to be absent the whole morning on business. This gave an opportunity not to be neglected. I invited Watson, before the servants, as he was leaving the room with his gun, to see my tame pheasants: of course he assented, and we silently proceeded to a summer-house in the grounds, and, when there, I made my request in a manner the least likely to offend. I stated the difficulty I was then under, which prevented my

offering to furnish him with money immediately, and promised to do so the very instant I could command it. He heard me at first with incredulity, and seemed sulky and angry when at length convinced; however, it luckily occurred to me that some of my trinkets might perhaps purchase his compliance: I ran over in mind those I could part with and yet not incur observation, and offered them. They were discontentedly accepted, and I turned to fly to the house for them with a transport I could hardly disguise, when Watson said, 'Stay; you are sensible there would be danger were I to attempt to dispose of trinkets belonging to you in Dublin; they might be recognized, and I might be taken up for robbery. I have a better thought, which will raise money that will enable me to quit the country, which I know is what you want—Luxborough is a good-natured fellow, and I think likes me well enough; I'll borrow a couple of thousands from him.'

"'Oh, Watson,' I exclaimed, 'think what a wild idea you entertain. What plea can you have for expecting he would comply with such an extravagant proposal?'—'Why, you shall say you know I lent it to your father, and that you wish he would repay it — this will sound very probable.'—'And you would have me take advantage of his affection to join in such a base imposition?—No, never—I cannot and will not.'—'You must and shall,' said he; 'you who ought not to possess any thing I have not, is it just and fair that you should live in wealth and luxury, and refuse to help me with money not amounting to a fifth of your income? and that, when, if it was not for my forbearance, a word would reduce you to beggary? You are my property, and it is your duty to share *my* situation.'—'Oh Watson,' I cried, sinking on my knees; 'Oh, Watson, have pity on me! Consider how young I was when your aunt delivered me to you, and how unfairly she abused the ascendency

she possessed over my mind; think how I have suffered and am suffering, and think, too, that whatever your decision and my fate may be, my whole life must prove a long struggle of remorse, shame, and sorrow. Have pity upon me—have pity upon me!'

"My voice was choked with sobs, my whole frame convulsed with anguish, and my agitation so great, that I had not perceived the entrance of Colonel Luxborough, who now stood beside me! The moment I became conscious of his presence, the shock chilled and silenced my agitation. His beautiful and terrible countenance revealed a struggle equal to my own. For some moments he was unable to utter, and certainly could not have thoroughly understood what was passing; but he saw me at the feet of Watson, whose imperious and contemptuous manner proved that in some way I was at his mercy. Luxborough lost his habitual self-command; he raised his arm as if to strike Watson, who immediately seized the gun, which

rested against the wall. Luxborough forced it from his grasp, and threw it out of the open door, exclaiming, 'Begone!' Watson obeyed in silence.

"Luxborough raised me from the ground: he appeared trying to attain some degree of self-command. 'Maria,' he said, 'endeavour to be sincere with me; you have seen I can command myself. You,—even *he* has nothing to fear from me. I can bear your confession, whatever it may prove; but disguise is fruitless. This man, then,—you love him!'—'Oh! no, Luxborough, I love you. I never did love any but you. I am too miserable through my falsehood not to speak the truth now—I am Watson's wife!'

"Luxborough staggered back a few paces: the worst to me was over, and I gained strength to tell my wretched story. Luxborough constrained himself to hear the whole. He desired me to return to the house, and he would see me again in the morning. It added to my un-

speakable suffering to see what an effort it cost him to be calm. I spent that night of misery in perturbation little short of delirium; yet I felt it was something to have no concealment; I felt more miserable, but less guilty. In the morning Luxborough came home—for the last time to *our* home! I heard his step in his dressing-room for an hour before he sent to require my presence in the library. I felt our conversation would be final, and that he was preparing to endure the trial. How those few hours had left their trace on his countenance!

"Neither did he behold without compassion and surprise the state of the unhappy creature he was compelled to discard. 'Base as the conduct of Watson has been,' said he, 'he *is* your husband, and has much to forgive in you. In consideration of my past illusion, and the interest I must ever retain in your fate, I will provide for your comfort and safety; but if possible, you had better reconcile yourself with him.'

"'No, Luxborough,' I cried; 'Watson vo-

luntarily abandoned me when I could have borne to live with him. After an absence of thirteen years we accidentally met. Had it not been for your wealth, probably that meeting would have also been our last. After what I have endured from his rapacity in the last year, after he has torn me from your heart and presence, were he all he is not, and possessed of a throne, and still willing to share it with me, my only determination would be never to behold him again. I would willingly accept the means of sustaining my deplorable existence from your hand, but I will not make an incitement for Watson to pursue me. I desire beggary to preserve me from him. You can give nothing but your forgiveness that can in any way soothe my despair. If I live till you are consoled for my deception, till you have chosen a more deserving companion, promise that you will tell me of it, promise me that you will then write, ' Maria, I am happy: the evil influence you cast over part of my life has passed

away.' This is all, Luxborough, nay, it is more than I deserve.'

"'It is true,' said he, 'that a time will probably come when this overwhelming event may be thought of calmly — I know it must. In human hearts no feeling is perpetual; but mine are not transient, Maria: for four years past they have all been revealed to you, and the heaviest consequence, as regards me, of our mutual sorrow is, that many years must elapse before I can look to any new source of happiness. May you turn from all earthly interests, repent the deception which has cost us both so much sorrow, and devote the remainder of your life to penitence! In me you will ever find a true friend, an attached brother. I will take care that the money paid for your service does not subject you to Watson's avarice. Our story will soon be public. Go to Dublin: you will find a lodging prepared in —— street for your reception. Here is a purse; you will not refuse it from me. I shall offer Watson

an annuity, to be paid while he resides in America and leaves you unmolested.'

"With torrents of tears I left Luxborough. An addition to my shame, if not to my sorrow, was produced, by Watson having commenced proceedings against me for bigamy. His success in this measure condemned me to transportation. Watson had done this in revenge for the manner in which Luxborough had treated him in their last interview, and for my refusal to assist him farther. He probably repented it, but I never saw him more. I have since heard, that, during his subsequent residence in England, my depraved husband, to whom an *alias* was convenient, went sometimes by the name of Wilson, and sometimes by that of Parkhurst."

At the mention of this latter name, Carwell started and turned pale. Having asked a few questions as to Watson's appearance, voice, and manner, he became convinced that the destroyer of Mrs. Lyle—of his present companion, and of

himself, was one individual. Alas! he did not yet know that the fate of his beloved wife was also the work of the same diabolical agent!

"Colonel Luxborough," resumed Mrs. Morley, "was, indeed, a friend

'To more than human friendship just.'

He did every thing for my comfort that kindness could suggest, and obtained every alleviation to my humiliation. When I should arrive, it was his wish that I should adopt my present mode of life. Even here my usefulness is owing to him, and to him I am indebted for a yet more precious advantage. In the first real consciousness of guilt I was destined to feel, I only regretted *him*, now I bewail *my errors*. In reading the religious books with which he provided me, I spend all the hours which my profession does not engross, and I have thus little time for tears.

"Seven years after I left Ireland, Colonel Luxborough made a second choice, every way calculated to reconcile him to the events that

caused my banishment. He is now a happy husband and father; and if I am not happy, I am contented, and most conscious that I do not deserve the degree of peace I have attained."

CHAPTER XX.

CARWELL had heard Mrs. Morley's story with interest. He felt how thankful he ought to be that he should still have an opportunity of redeeming his past faults: his happiness would be restored, and he thought how much Mrs. Morley would be pleased with his wife, and how Charlotte would enjoy her society. He frequently described and praised her to the former, who heard with gentle kindness and constant attention all his conjectures and plans, and sometimes checked his sanguine calculations as to the time of Charlotte's arrival.

But, as time wore on, Mrs. Morley was less discouraging; assisted in his calculations and

arrangements for Charlotte's reception ;—nay, one day, when, contrary to his constant custom, he entered without adverting to his usual intelligence respecting the direction of the wind, &c. Mrs. Morley exclaimed :—

" This wind will bring us some Englisn ship, I am certain. They ought to be coming by this time, we have been so long without one."

At any time the words " English ship" would have almost choked Carwell with agitation, even when there was little likelihood of its bearing any interest for him ; but now, when he might *reasonably* hope to hear from Charlotte, when he might *possibly* see her, there seemed no reason for checking expectation. How much better was the lot he had to offer than she could have hoped for a short time before ! he felt ashamed not to be more deserving of the happy future he pictured to himself. The few words which Mrs. Morley had uttered had unfitted his mind for every species of

application; he threw down his pen and walked into the open air in impatient restlessness.

A grove of gum-trees in the neighbourhood of the plantation had long been a favourite retreat of his. In moments of leisure he had grown to love the trees as friends, with whom he could freely converse, and throw aside the reserve he was in other places forced to maintain. The spot of all others he most preferred was beneath an enormous palm-tree, which stood alone on a rising ground, from whence a view of the sea might be obtained. On this day a soft sighing wind blew fair for the port; a cloudless sky and bright sun gave that undefined feeling of hope and happiness which nature in her gayest appearance will often bestow.

He cast his eyes towards the sea, and beheld a ship. It was no illusion. The English colours were apparent — she neared. Carwell flew to the house, and, after a short period of intense anxiety, was blessed with the sight of a

canvass bag directed to Mr. Ranmore, which contained all the letters for the persons belonging to his establishment.—Alas! there was not one for Carwell, though most of his companions had been gratified by obtaining some news of their homes, friends, and country.

His impatience was increased by the indifference with which some of his companions treated a privilege he so deeply envied. One reviled a brother who had written many pages of counsel and reprehension;—one laughed at the lamentations of a mother at the absence of her only son;—another, who had letters from two wives, congratulated himself aloud that he was rid of both;—another considered the sympathy and remembrance of his absent friends as of little value, as their letters were unaccompanied by pecuniary assistance. But some *did* enjoy the happiness of hearing from those they loved and who loved them; and Carwell saw them with kinder feelings and with less envy; but those who had not cared for their letters or

those who wrote them, he beheld with an irritation he could scarcely conceal.

When disappointment is complete, after a short time it is easier to bear than suspense. It is something to rest, not to be obliged to watch every sound, nor to fix your eyes on the door or window as if bound by a spell. After fretting some time, Carwell returned to the grove, and sat down, weary and sad, to picture to himself all the obstacles that might have proved a hindrance to his hearing of his wife. He was soon disturbed by one of his fellow-clerks, who came with a parcel of English newspapers, which had been lent him by the Captain of the newly-arrived ship: he was only permitted to keep them for a few hours, and began to read them out to his companions, who had followed him to this spot. They did not perceive Carwell, though he was close to them; he did not speak, nor for some time attended to what was passing; at length something caught his attention, and he also

listened with some interest to various pieces of intelligence, until an account of the offences and proceedings in criminal causes struck on his ear, and his own name riveted his attention :—" Trial of Charlotte Carwell, for forgery or uttering false money." He rose and stood without speaking and without being observed, so intent were the auditors on the reader. The details of what has been already related concerning Charlotte's trial were given with the utmost particularity, and the paper proceeded with the subjoining circumstances.

" Charlotte Carwell spent the days subsequently to her trial in constant prayer; she expressed great anxiety relative to the arrival of a gentleman, who had promised to use his influence in getting the peculiar and extenuating circumstances of her case known, that she might be recommended to mercy. Her disappointment at not hearing from him was very great; and when the time drew on without bringing any intelligence respecting her

fate—when at length aware that there was no hope of pardon, she submitted with equal mildness and fortitude, frequently expressing her hope, that her husband, who had been transported a year since for being concerned in an offence nearly similar, would be consoled for her loss, and sometimes expressing her fears of the effect which the disastrous intelligence might have on his mind. The youth and extreme beauty of this young woman, her gentle and refined manners, her great attachment to her husband, and fortitude in her melancholy situation, interested all who approached her; and though, to all who did, such scenes were necessarily familiar, they each owned such sufferers were not common. She appeared to be quite friendless; no one came to see her but the clergyman, who was moved to tears more than once when quitting her cell. On the Sunday preceding the day appointed for her execution, when he came, she seemed more depressed than he had yet seen her, and the

traces of long-continued weeping were visible in her countenance. She presented a letter, directed to her husband, which she requested Mr. Sancroft would take every precaution to have conveyed safely to his hands; and she also begged him to take charge of another paper, in which she placed a long and shining curl of her jet-black hair, adding, that she earnestly wished her wedding-ring might, after her execution, be placed with it. 'But,' said she, with a faint smile, 'I do not choose to part with it while I am yet living; I wish to look at it the last thing on earth, as I cannot see Carwell.'

"Mr. Sancroft assured her that he would faithfully execute any trust she might confide to him, and would certainly forward her letter. 'And now,' said he, 'may I hope that this melancholy farewell is over? You will, as much as possible, turn your mind from the objects likely to agitate and distress it, and prepare for the last and most important task of render-

ing up that account which *must* be required of you (and *may* be of me) to-morrow, and of all our contemporaries in a very few years. A celebrated female,* who, at an early age, was stretched on what she then supposed (and what it had been happy for her, perhaps, had it proved) to be her death-bed, when reminded of the short time allotted even to those likely to survive her, said, 'Yes, I leave only dying men.' Probably she at that moment endeavoured to consider prolonged life but as a span, that she might seem to herself to lose but little by terminating hers so early; yet she was saved from the peril of death at that time, to lead a long course of vice. Perhaps your destiny might have resembled hers; perhaps your early fate has saved you from perishing many years hence, in the horrors of remorse, and the incapability of repentance, with feelings dulled from persevering depravity, and a heart cold from age; surrounded by the com-

* Ninon de l'Enclos.

panions such conduct had bound to you, and without even the humble aid of him who now beseeches you to think on those heavenly words, 'Acquaint thyself with *me*, and be at peace.' To be at peace is the gift you will receive in consequence of 'acquainting thyself with Him and his ways;' in no other way can peace be obtained, either here or hereafter, however various may be the means tried, and the characters who try them; and unworthy as we are, through intercession, the ever blessed Jesus is ready to hear all such, as 'call upon Him faithfully.' To sanctify our languid devotion, and the imperfection of those actions which human vanity would fain call blameless, or even meritorious, did not conscience own them debased by the alloy of so many motives, nothing can avail us but his own great atonement.—Long and fervently did Mr. Sancroft urge these truths. Charlotte listened with docility, with an earnest desire to avail herself of his instructions; and the blessing she sought was never yet denied to those who seek

it in earnest. She became more calm, and at times was enabled to look beyond the present affliction.

" Mr. Sancroft being obliged to visit another unfortunate person in similar circumstances, Charlotte took up a book to which many afflicted eyes have turned for consolation. It was Doddridge's ' Rise and Progress of Religion,' and in which few, perhaps, have been disappointed. The earnest simplicity — the fervent devotion of his own pure soul, hallow even the defects of his style; and his heart must be hard indeed, whose eyes do not swell with tears, when he utters the ' Amen' which this author, in his Christian humility, begs of his readers.

" Charlotte dropped the volume, and, as it fell, a number of dried leaves fell from it, which had been placed between the pages by her own hand, and by that of Carwell; among them she saw the blossom of a yellow single rose, which Carwell had given her the day before she

was married. Involuntarily she took it up from the ground; it seemed to bring back the day and hour when it was received: it was her favourite flower, and when she saw it droop, she had jestingly lamented that objects so lovely should be so short-lived; but that rose should survive its fellows at least, and she placed it between the leaves of the book from whence it now fell. Its colour and form remained, though its companions had long been dust; and where were *her's?* Her kind and anxious mother was at peace; and many thousand miles of ocean were between her and Carwell! The flower remained, but her life would pass more quickly. She had come forth 'as a flower to be cut down, and as a shadow which fleeth and continueth not.' Charlotte wept bitterly—the rose was the only memorial of times past that remained with her.

"Yet that very observation ought to have been a consolation — ought to have reminded her, that if the occurrences of three years had

robbed her of all that made existence precious, what would she suffer in the course of a life subjected to all the mutations which thirty years more might produce !

" The evening came on, when the sorrowful are more heavy — when the solitary are more lonely ; but after a paroxysm of grief there is a physical alteration. Without cause the spirits rise, merely because they have been depressed—because the heart of finite man cannot entertain a ceaseless feeling. With the privation of earthly comforters we turn and cling to heavenly hopes with more confidence and fervour ; Charlotte felt this, and with the dawn of morn arose from prayer to arrange her dress for the last time. The deep mourning she had worn at her trial formed a striking contrast with the marble paleness of her face. At five in the morning the cell-door was unbolted to admit Mr. Sancroft, who found her composed, and not dejected, though grave. After spending some time in prayer, she told

him she was ready. One of the turnkeys asked if there were not some friend of whom she wished to take leave before she quitted the prison. This demand recalled the abandonment of her situation to Charlotte's mind; her voice trembled slightly, and, after a short pause, she again said she was ready, and with a firm though slow step she passed through the gloomy passages from the press-yard. 'The valley of the shadow of death,' said Mr. Sancroft, 'will soon be passed; these are your last earthly trials, bear them as one entering another life should do.' She obeyed, and with a firm step ascended the scaffold; a deep blush overspread her face for an instant on finding herself an object of attention to the spectators, but it quickly faded, and she was absorbed in prayer for some minutes; she then requested Mr. Sancroft would take off her wedding-ring, and remember her request of sending it with her letter, and one from himself, to assure Carwell that she died with resignation, and with

unabated affection to him: she thanked Mr. Sancroft for his pious and humane cares, and bade him adieu!

"A minute more, and all was over!—so much courage, sorrow, and passionate affection, was no more. Youth, beauty, those gifts so valued while they last, passed suddenly away; and life, often valued when nothing else is left the possessor—that too is gone from Charlotte Carwell!"

When the reader had ceased, the auditors simultaneously expressed their compassion and regret, and one of them added, he feared it must be Carwell's wife that had died—the wife whom for some time past they knew he had been expecting with the utmost anxiety—for whose reception he had been making many arrangements. This they had rather understood than learned from his lips, for, like all who feel deeply, Carwell had been far from communicative to those about him.

They now saw him going towards the house.

His back was to them, and they stood some minutes fearing and conjecturing that he must have heard part of what they had read; but he appeared to be composedly proceeding, and they were willing to hope that such tidings had not reached his unprepared mind by their means.

CONCLUSION.

Miss Ranmore, the sister of Carwell's superior, was preparing the tea when the latter entered the house. "Oh, Mr. Carwell!" she exclaimed, "how glad I am to tell you that this same wind has brought in a second ship, and here are two letters for you. They came this instant, and I hope with good news; I was just sending to look for you." Carwell hastily advanced, and received the letters in silence. This caused Miss Ranmore to raise her eyes to his face, when she was struck by its deadly paleness—his parted yet contracted lips, and dilated eyes. She has since said, that his hand, as it sought the letters and accidentally touched her's, was cold, damp, and stiff, as if already

belonging to a corpse. But these appearances seemed to belong to intense anxiety only, and she could but pity its excess.

He instantly quitted the apartment; and the inmates of the house had too much compassion to intrude upon his solitude or offer condolence that evening, for the event which had befallen him was made known by his fellow clerks on their return to the house. The good-natured Miss Ranmore placed various refreshments in his chamber, and lighting a lamp, beside which she placed a Bible, retired, hoping she had done all that could be done for him, when he should return from his solitary wandering.

The next morning she requested her brother to see if Carwell was yet able to bear a friendly attempt to offer consolation, and was somewhat shocked to find the lamp still burning. The bed had not been occupied; all was as she had left it; Carwell had evidently not been there that night. Mr. Ranmore at length proposed to seek him, and various persons belonging to the establishment were sent

forth in different directions to search in those places where he was accustomed to walk. Many hours elapsed before all these messengers returned, and all owned they could not discover any trace of him they sought. Mr. Ranmore and his sister, who had begun to feel sincere regard for him, were full of alarm, and for above a week persisted in detaching parties in quest of him. At length they began to conjecture, that, unable to bear continuing where he had hoped so different a destiny, he had fled from the place; and this was preferable to other conjectures which were sometimes formed in their minds.

One day Mr. Ranmore had ridden several miles with a friend who had been staying with him, and was with his party returning to Sydney. The sun beat fiercely on a part of the way which was lately cleared from trees, and Mr. Ranmore, on his return, preferred a circuitous way, which, though wild, was luxuriant in shade. One of the dogs which accompanied him suddenly began to bark, and

showed such anxiety and disquiet, that his master felt sufficient curiosity to alight and lead his horse towards the spot where the dog was standing.

A moment served to convince him that Carwell was here! he had apparently been sitting at the root of a tree, and was now lying on his side at the foot of it — but life was extinct — he seemed to have died without a struggle, and his friends had the satisfaction to think he had not perished by self-murder. His corpse exhibited no marks of violence. One hand was in his bosom and firmly grasped two letters, which were recognised as those he received from the hands of Miss Ranmore on the day the intelligence of Charlotte's death reached him; one letter was that she wrote as her farewell, the other was from Mr. Sancroft, containing the details of her death, her wedding ring, and the lock of her hair, already mentioned as intrusted to him.

The precise circumstances of Carwell's death, of course, could never be known. It was sup-

posed that a blood-vessel in the brain had given way from intense emotion. He was buried in the wild solitude to which his errors had led him, not without the compassionate sighs of those who had been his latest companions. More than once did those who knew his history shed a tear to the memory of Charlotte's fate, and the undeserved and dishonoured grave to which her ashes were consigned. By her, could she have known it, this sympathy would have been unvalued; the only fact that might have excited her regret, is, that even in death it was not her fate to be near Carwell.

Of all to whom her fate became known, it was most lamented by Dudley. When his convalescence was sufficiently advanced to permit of his leaving the house, he opened a writing-case, in which various papers had been placed during the time he had been incapable of attending to business. He was greatly startled at finding among them the order on his banker which he had given to the

physician to be transmitted to Charlotte. That gentleman now entered to take his leave of Dudley: knowing his departure was to take place that morning, Dudley in great agitation inquired why his orders had not been complied with, and was answered, that it was a pious fraud. "You were then, my dear Sir," said his medical friend, "in a precarious state of health, and evinced great anxiety on this subject. At the time you gave the order, the newspaper had already announced the execution of the unfortunate person in whom you had taken such humane interest. We deemed it our duty not to give you intelligence so distressing till you were better able to sustain it without injury, especially as it was too late to avail the sufferer."

Dudley was too heart-stricken to reply. As circumstances had occurred, he could not blame those about him for their wish to spare him a needless shock; but he long and deeply lamented not having associated any one in his efforts to serve Charlotte. He felt that, had he

done so, she might, perhaps, have been saved; and he thought with anguish of what she must have suffered from supposing he had neglected a task in which he had promised so much zeal and activity, and that she had met death with this opinion. Many were his moments of regret, very bitter his reflections; and, after the occurrence of this event, he was—

"A sadder and a wiser man."

THE END.

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